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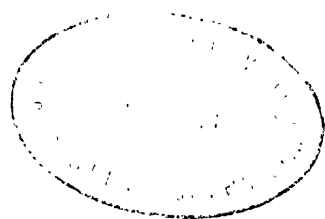
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BENGAL GOVERNMENT SELECTIONS.

PAPERS REGARDING THE

VILLAGE AND RURAL INDIGENOUS AGENCY

EMPLOYED IN TAKING

THE BENGAL CENSUS

OF

1872.

CALCUTTA:

PRINTED AT THE BENGAL SECRETARIAT PRESS.

1873.

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VILLAGE AND RURAL INDIGENOUS AGENCY

EMPLOYED IN TAKING

THE BENGAL CENSUS OF 1872.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS CALLING FOR REPORT UPON THE AGENCY EMPLOYED IN TAKING THE CENSUS.

No. 1279, dated Calcutta, the 13th April 1872.

From—T. J. CRICHELE PLOWDEN, Esq., Offg. Under-Secretary to the
Government of Bengal,

To—All Commissioners.

THE Lieutenant-Governor wishes to have before him information showing clearly and fully the *modus operandi* of taking the late census, especially the agency employed, and explaining what indigenous agency for carrying on any work of the kind exists.

2. His Honor desires that this opportunity may not be lost of showing the Government what indigenous institutions so much survive that active and *thorough* Collectors have been able to make use of them, whether they be munduls, village punchayets, putwarees, chowkidars, or any others; and also, what assistance was derived from landholders or their agents or servants, the class and character of such agent being particularly explained.

3. So far as His Honor is yet informed, he is inclined to believe that the census operations have been very creditable to the officers of this Government as a body, and have developed the administrative power and capacity of Government for getting at facts in a greater degree than had hitherto been supposed to exist, and for these reasons the Lieutenant-Governor is very anxious to be informed of all the details.

4. The report called for in the Inspector-General of Registration's letter No. 2C, dated 23rd January 1872, paragraph 4, is probably under preparation by you; if so, you will be good enough to embody in it full and clear information on the points indicated in this letter, and you should send in the report to the Government direct, who will pass it on to Mr. Beverley.

5. If your report has already been sent in to Mr. Beverley, you should supplement it by any further information which may be necessary. Nothing need be repeated, as your report will be obtained from Mr. Beverley for perusal.

No. 1280.

COPY forwarded to Mr. Beverley for information, with a request that he will send to this office, for the perusal of the Lieutenant-Governor, any of the reports which he may have received or may receive. They will be returned as soon as possible; and all reports received direct in this office will be passed on to him to enable him to compile the general report.

Circular No. 22, dated Calcutta, the 16th July 1872.

From—C. BERNARD, Esq., Offg. Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal in the General Department,

To—All Commissioners.

OWING to a misapprehension, the Inspector-General of Registration seems to have informed you that the report called for by my circular No. 1279 of 13th April last, regarding the indigenous agency brought to light in the course of the census operations, was not required by Government. It appears from the reports in Mr. Beverley's office that in consequence most of the Commissioners have not reported, as required by Government, at all, while others have reported without obtaining special reports on the points noted in the circular of 13th April from the Magistrates of districts. Most of the Magistrates have submitted very full and good reports on the mode of taking the census, but in the majority of cases their reports were despatched before receipt of the Government circular above quoted, and consequently do not deal specially with the points on which the Government desired to have special information. I am now therefore to request that every Magistrate of a district who has not already fully reported with direct reference to the circular of 13th April, may now be directed to do so as soon and as carefully as possible. And I am to beg that you will carefully collate these reports and yourself report on the whole subject, both from the information derived from your subordinates and from the personal knowledge which you have or can collect.

2. In addition to the enumeration of the various indigenous agents employed, the Lieutenant-Governor wishes that you and your district officers should explain fully and clearly who the various village notables or officials mentioned are: *e.g.*, in the case of village headmen, munduls, mukhyas, pardhans, or by whatever name they are known, it should be explained what is the origin, history, and present state of these village heads. The Lieutenant-Governor has been informed by natives of position and experience that a generation or two ago village headmen were much more general, and occupied a better-defined and established position than now; the increasing and more centralised power of the zemindars having caused their decadence in these days. He would like to know if this is believed to be the case in each district. Where there are still headmen, it should be stated whether they are the representatives or remnants of an ancient institution; whether they are now in practice to any degree more or less hereditary, or are practically elected by the people or nominated by the zemindar, or how they obtain their status; also, what is their position and authority, and whether they generally hold continuously or are dismissed

and changed at pleasure. It should be mentioned whether there is generally only one or several munduls in a village.

3. Allusion is made to village punchayets in parts of the Burdwan and Rajshahye divisions. The Lieutenant-Governor would much like to know, in regard to each district, if there are any such punchayets or established village councils exercising some authority in the village.

4. The reports already received show the prevalence of putwarees in districts where it was not known to the Lieutenant-Governor that this institution survived: *e.g.*, in the districts of Dinagepore and Rungpore, as well as in all Behar, in Orissa, and in some of the eastern districts. Wherever putwarees or village accountants under any other name exist, the Lieutenant-Governor would like to have full particulars regarding them, such as he has asked for in regard to munduls. In particular, their hereditary character or otherwise, their remuneration, their functions, &c., should be fully stated; and it should be mentioned of what classes or castes they are,—whether they are simply accountants, or whether they also collect rents for zemindars, or keep shops and lend money on their own account, and any other particulars.

5. The Magistrate of Hooghly has alluded to the existence of phareedars, fouzdars, buxees, and other remnants of an old police organization. The Lieutenant-Governor would much wish to know if anything of the kind exists or has existed in any other of the western districts, or in any other part of the country.

6. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes that this subject will have your very particular attention.

BURDWAN DIVISION.

No. 60, dated Burdwan, the 17th February 1873.

From—C. T. BUCKLAND, Esq., Commissioner of the Burdwan Division,

To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

WITH reference to your circular No. 22 of the 16th July last, I have the honor to submit the following report on the village agencies in the several districts of this division.

2. In my report No. 352 of 1st July last, to the address of the Inspector-General of Registration, I furnished such information regarding the agencies utilized in the late census as I could gather from the district officers. That report would have been submitted direct to Government as was first ordered in the Government letter No. 1279 of 13th April last, but the subsequent orders, No. 317C of 6th June, prohibited the direct submission of the report.

1st.—Mundals or mukhyas.

2nd.—Pradhans.

3rd.—Other indigenous village notables.

4th.—Gomastahs.

5th.—Village punchayets.

3. I now propose to divide the members who constitute the village agencies under the classes noted in the margin, and will submit the information given by the local officers as to each of these separately.

4. *Munduls or Mukhyas.*—The Magistrate of Burdwan reports as follows. He states that there exists in the villages of Burdwan the “mundul” or headman, pronounced “mural,” a corruption of the Sanscrit “monda,” a head. Under the Mahomedan rule, and in the earlier days of the British rule, they were called “mokuddums.” The position is hereditary, descending from father to son, and recognized by offerings of betel and sweetmeats on the occasion of poojahs, and by money donations from talookdars at the period of “poonnah.” In the same village may be found more than one mundul. This may have arisen from their ancestors having been joint undivided members of the old village raj. All local squabbles and cases are decided by the mundul, and intercourse with the police is carried on through him. He never acts as a gomastah. He may be of any caste, and in the old Sanscrit writings he is spoken of as the village king. This individual is often illiterate: without his assistance village inquiries are generally fruitless.

5. The Magistrate of Bancoorah reports that the existence of one or more munduls or mukhyas in each village is almost universal in this district, the only exceptions being those villages which are entirely, or almost entirely, inhabited by Brahmins, Kaystas, or Baidyas. The number of munduls depends upon the size of the village and its population, there being generally one to each mohulla or sub-division. The Magistrate believes that originally such officers were appointed by the villagers, subject to the veto of the zemindar or other superior ruling authority. The munduls were generally selected with reference to

their knowledge of the village affairs and power to represent the interests of their fellow-villagers, the possession of a large quantity of land being generally looked upon as a *sine qua non*. The landlord had no power to remove a mundul when once appointed, and the villagers never ousted him except for misconduct. At first there was no regular rule as to succession, but gradually, as might naturally be expected, the office became hereditary, except in cases of deposition for misconduct, when the village crown was bestowed upon the candidate who appeared most worthy. While this system flourished, the munduls or mukhyas had very extensive duties and substantial authority. Their duties were threefold,—*first*, relating to matters between landlord and tenant; *second*, of a social nature; and *third*, relating to general police. Under the first head may be included the following:—The landlord consulted the mundul when fixing rents in disputes between landlord and tenant; the mundul looked after the interests of the latter; his duty was also to summon the tenants to *pooniah*, or the first day fixed for the payment of rents; he was a prominent actor in that ceremony, being the first to pay his rent, and getting a small reward for his punctuality; he also was the medium through which the landlord levied extraordinary contributions on such occasions as marriages, special poojahs, or other ceremonies. Their social duties were very important; their decisions were final in all petty disputes between the villagers; in matters of caste they were supreme; they were necessary in all marriage ceremonies and the like; and generally took the lead in all social movements. Their duties to the ruling power chiefly consisted in giving information of crime, and assisting police officers in the detection and arrest of the offender. They also pointed out boundaries when required to do so by any court authorities. Munduls had no regular remuneration. They held their land at a slightly lower rate than their fellow-villagers, being exempted to a certain extent from any enhancement of their rents. They also received various presents in kind when their services were put in requisition. Their influence was however their chief reward. There is now little but the name remaining of such a powerful institution; except amongst the very poor and ignorant, the authority of the mundul is a thing of the past. Although village disputes are referred to him, no one thinks himself bound in the slightest degree by his decision. The causes of this rapid decline of their authority are the following—the zemindar's enormous power under the British rule, and the admission of all complaints in the courts. The zemindar's paid servants, the gomastahs, and the like, are more regarded and feared than any other local magnates. Another cause of the decline of the mundul dynasty is the uniform disregard of the mundul's position by all British officials. He is called on to perform minor services, such as giving information, supplying rissud to officers of all grades when in his neighbourhood, and is not looked upon as the man who, from his position in the village, should be respected and obeyed.

6. The Magistrate of Beerbhoom reports as follows:—"The term 'mundul' is Sanscrit, its primary meaning being 'a circle.' From this comes 'mundulee,' a society. The mundul was the head of the village society. The office of mundul was created before the Mussulman

conquest of Bengal. Appointments to it were made not by election, but by the nomination of the zemindar or of the ruling power. Usually the person paying the largest amount of revenue in a village was appointed mundul, and he was recognized as the constitutional referee in all matters affecting the village community, and as arbiter of village disputes. His primary duty was to assist the zemindar in measuring and ascertaining the boundaries of the lands held by each ryot, and to assist in the collection of revenue. He was generally responsible for the peace of the village, and for the bringing to justice of all kinds of malefactors. His authority being recognized both by the superior powers and the community, he had great influence in the village. There was no salary attached to the post of the mundul, but he sometimes was allowed to hold his lands at a slightly lower rate of rent than the other ryots; and once a year, on the *pooniah* day, he usually received some complimentary token of approbation, such as a suit of clothes or a trifling present of money. The mundul's office became hereditary, and it is so still, but his position is now of much less importance than it originally was. He is still looked to by the zemindar to assist in the realization of rent, and is still bound to assist the police in the apprehension of offenders. But, except in small agricultural villages, he no longer possesses the influence he did amongst his fellow-villagers. This is due partly to the increased centralization both in zemindaree management and police administration, and partly to the spread of education. The title of mundul, which was originally specially bestowed on selected persons in each village, appears now to have gradually been acquired by any number of substantial ryots, whose superior means seem to constitute an acknowledged right to the complimentary designation."

7. In Midnapore the Magistrate states that there is not a single village that has not a regularly constituted headman. In some cases the same man is the head of two or more small villages situated close to each other, and in the case of large villages there are often two or more headmen, each mohulla or ward having its own headman. There are five designations under which all village headmen are known, namely, ameens, mukhyas, munduls, pradhans, and barooahs. The institution of the village headman was in existence many years previous to British rule, and it appears to be a general belief that in the time of the Mahomedan rulers the headmen were appointed by the Government direct. In those days, from all accounts, these headmen had considerable power and influence, and were to a very great extent independent of the zemindars. They were allowed to dispose of petty cases, and village disputes were in the first instance brought before them, and only those they could not settle were sent up to higher authority. At present the headmen are to a great extent, and nearly all over the district, creatures of the zemindars. In some instances son has succeeded father for two or more generations; still the office cannot be called hereditary, as each succeeding appointment is made by the zemindar. Not unfrequently the villagers nominate the candidate, but the confirmation of the appointment or otherwise rests with the zemindar. In former times the appointment of headman of a village was much sought after, as the holder was looked up to as the real chief of

the village, and had considerable actual power ; but this is not the case now.

8. The Magistrate of Hooghly gives the following account of munduls or mukhyas :—"The office of the mundul is generally hereditary, but in failure of heirs, the zemindars, with the approval of the villagers, may appoint. In a village containing two or more munduls, a separate jurisdiction is assigned to each, and in this he reigns supreme. The munduls have gradually become less numerous, and the post has, of late years, not been so coveted as of yore. In this district munduls are now chosen from the Sutgopes, Talees, or Gowalas. Their duties are mainly connected with the law, and at one time they appear to have held posts somewhat like honorary magistrates. The improvement which has lately taken place in the police has gone far towards undermining their power and depriving them of their privileges. At one time no process could be served without the assistance of the mundul, no complaint could be lodged before the regular police till the party had first been to the mundul. If the case was a heavy one, all the munduls of the village were invited to attend. A meeting was convened, and the case was formally tried. The mundul is even yet considered to be the chowkidar's immediate superior, and is held by him in great awe. The mundul of the present day is treated by the zemindar with much of the respect which he received in times gone by. At the close of the financial year, when the tenants assemble at the zemindaree cutcherry to give each his offering, and is treated in turn to a refreshment of sweetmeats, the mundul is first served, and gets the present of a cloth as a mark of respect. The mundul still exercises considerable influence in police matters. He is looked to for assistance in all investigations, and it is usually at his house that the police officer puts up. Should one of the munduls commit an offence against society, he may be dismissed by the zemindar, but not without having first obtained the consent of the other munduls and the villagers. Should the zemindar act simply upon his own authority, the order would be disregarded and the offender would still continue to be one of the body. The munduls as above described are only to be found in a few villages. In others they are met with, but minus some of their powers. In some villages there are seven or eight munduls, but the average is three. They are rapidly losing their influence and are being supplanted by the gomastah and the pradhan. The causes of the decline of this as well as all other old village institutions are—*first*, the systematic neglect of such agencies by the Government; *second*, the growing power of the zemindars; and *third*, the decreasing need of such agencies occasioned by the introduction of a regular police, a strong government, and the multiplication of sub-divisions."

9. In Howrah, the Magistrate reports that the mundul is in some places known by the denomination of "pradhan" and "mukhya." They are elected or nominated by the local officers attached to the zemindar's estate, the ryots having no voice in the appointment. The office is hereditary, and the selections are made generally from the class of Kybortos, Bagdees, Chundals, and Mahomedans. The object with which they were originally appointed was to facilitate the collection of rent,

and to exercise a kind of control over the proceedings of the lower classes of ryōts. They are also entrusted with the duties of reporting the occurrence of crimes in the village, of encroachment of land, of occupation of invalid lakhiraj by the villagers, and of everything which affects or concerns the interest of the landlord. The munduls are expected to aid and co-operate with the police in the investigation of cases, in the search of houses, and the elicitation of facts in connection with every occurrence. There are hardly more than six munduls in a village, but they are entirely at the bidding of gomastahs. Their appointments were subject to the approval of the zemindar. They were liable to dismissal whenever they were found in collision with the interests of the zemindar. On the *pooniah* day the munduls were the first to pay the rent and receive a piece of cloth or present from the zemindar on such occasions as a mark of respect. They also received small sums as presents from the ryots on occasions of a festival, a marriage, or a poojah. They assisted the zemindars in levying contributions (cesses), from the payment of which they themselves are generally exempted. They also used to settle petty village disputes. Their social position and influence have of late greatly diminished, owing to the advent of new ideas and the conflict of new laws.

10. *Pradhans*.—Mention is made of pradhans in the reports from Midnapore, Howrah, and Hooghly. In the first two reports pradhans are described as the same as munduls; and the following account is found of them in the Hooghly report:—"The pradhans, or *bhadras*, are not recognized village officers, but men who, by acquiring wealth by industry or ability, make their importance felt in the community amongst whom their lot is cast. This class is now fast usurping the mundul's place and undermining his authority. In the minds of the people the mundul may still hold a superior place, but as the pradhan gains strength by means of his ability and money, both of which are real, the mundul will lose his influence owing to his comparative poverty and his traditionary power, which is at present purely imaginative. The mundul has however this advantage over the pradhan, that his position is fixed, while that of the pradhan is dependent on his wealth and strength. As regards both classes of the mundul and pradhan, although the mundul's influence is sometimes advantageously employed in settling disputes and maintaining some opposition to an oppressive zemindar, the class of pradhans, retired tradesmen, and village usurers, are the very worst class to which authority could be entrusted."

11. *Other indigenous notables and remnants of the old police organization*.—The Magistrate of Burdwan makes mention of semandars and hulshannahs, who are charged with the protection of village crops, and are paid by chakran lands; phareedars and pyadas, charged with the watch and guard of roads, and paid by chakran lands; sirdars of ghāts, sadeals, and ghatwals, charged with the care of roads and passes through the hills, and paid by lands. These latter are met with in the portion of the district transferred from Bancoorah. Digwars, charged with the care of villages and paid by lands, are found in Niamutpore

and Burrakur divisions. Mention is also made of the following men who existed under the Mahomedan rule, and whose titles still survive:—

Chowdhuries.	Hazrahs.
Muzoomdars.	Kajees.
Sikdars.	Kotwals.
Mustafees.	Khoonkars.
Fouzdars.	Khans.
Buxees.	Mohunts.
Mustsudees.	Mollahs.

12. The Magistrate of Bancoorah reports that there are no traces of any old police organization in this district. The history of the ghatwals and chowkidars, he presumes, does not come within the scope of this report.

13. Nothing is mentioned of other indigenous village notables and of any remnants of the old police organizations in the Beerbhoom Magistrate's report.

14. The report of the Magistrate of Midnapore contains nothing under the above head. Mention is made only of chowkidars of three sorts,—*first*, those paid by the ryots; *second*, those paid by jagheers; *third*, those in the Government khas mehals paid by Government.

15. The following information is gathered from the report of the Magistrate of Hooghly regarding the remnants of the old police or fouzdaree organization:—"At the head of the fouzdaree organization of a zillah was the fouzdar, a high officer of great power. Under the fouzdars there appear to have been the phareedars and naib phareedars. The duties of the phareedars were to control the chowkidars' crime reports, &c., and for the performance of these duties a buxee or mohurir was allowed who did all the writing. There were buxeees only in that part of Jehanabad which has been transferred to Burdwan and Midnapore. The phareedar had also at his command pyadas to convey intelligence. There were other officers, as nishandars and others, who probably had similar offices to perform, and several of these, chiefly in Jehanabad, have kept their chakran lands to this day. Under the phareedars come the chowkidars, some of whom are paid by chakran lands, and some by dwarmoshaheru, or contributions from the villagers.

16. The Magistrate of Howrah states, on the authority of the District Superintendent of Police, that there are still phareedars and pyadas who are undoubtedly remnants of a village police which once existed and who still perform police duties.

17. *Gomastahs*.—The Magistrate of Burdwan reports that in each village there exist two gomastahs—the *mal* and the *fouzdaree*. The former is the revenue gomastah, collecting rents, keeping accounts, &c.; the latter is charged with giving information to the police of all crimes and offences, and supplying russud, &c. These appointments are not hereditary, but are made by the talookdars.

18. No mention is made of gomastahs by the Magistrates of Bancoorah and Beerbhoom. The Magistrate of Midnapore also does not give any account of gomastahs, but simply describes them as the zemindar's paid agents, and possessing considerable influence in their villages.

19. The following account of gomastahs is given by the Magistrate of Hooghly :—" In all large zemindarees there are two men of this class in each village. One superintends the zemindaree cutcherry in all its branches, and the other conducts cases civil and criminal. The first or *mal* gomastah is believed to be the putwaree of the old regulations. In point of fact there were officers called putwarees in this district, but the paid gomastah of the zemindar now performs the duties of a putwaree. The *mal* gomastah receives Rs. 3 to 6 pay, and other perquisites. He is the zemindar's representative in the village. The *fouzdaree* gomastah receives from Rs. 1-8 to 3 as monthly pay, yet he spends more than Rs. 50 per mensem. The difference is made chiefly by dishonest and oppressive means. His duty is to attend courts and to file papers there, and to watch the progress of cases, and to aid the mooktears and pleaders with his local knowledge. He takes part in police matters, and is expected to go on rounds with the phareedar and chowkidar. He seizes cattle and releases them, and arrests suspicious characters. In extortion and hushing up of cases he is a serious rival of the munduls, and when both are equally strong, the spoil is divided."

20. The Magistrate of Howrah merely reports that the gomastahs are the servants of the landholders. They collect rents and perform other duties connected with the village, such as sending information to the police, &c.

21. *Punchayets*.—The Magistrate of Burdwan reports that a village punchayet generally consists of the mundul, the gomastah, and one or two hereditary families out of which a member is selected to determine village questions. But I beg that it may be understood that there is no such thing as a permanent punchayet in a Burdwan village. It is only when a council of five or more persons is held in a village to determine any local or social question, that the persons above named are deemed most qualified to become members of such a council, which has no binding authority, however much its fiat may be respected in the village.

22. The Magistrate of Bancoorah states that punchayets do not now exist in any continuous form. The leading men in a village are sometimes called upon to decide certain points in dispute, and in the case of unusual occurrences, they are formed into a sort of executive committee.

23. The Magistrate of Beerbhoom believes that there are no indigenous punchayets in his district, but recourse is frequently had to the arbitration of the principal men of the village in certain disputes; and in questions of caste, to the leading representatives of the caste concerned.

24. No information regarding punchayets is given in the Midnapore report.

25. The following account of the punchayets is given in the Hooghly report :—" There does not seem to exist any regular punchayet system. It is true that meetings of the munduls and others are convened for the purpose of considering the nature and extent of the punishment which any particular person's misconduct should entail, or whether the zemindar should be opposed in any act of oppression, or whether funds for defending an accused with whom public sympathy goes, can be raised; but nothing has ever been heard of a meeting being held for sanitary purposes or for purposes affecting the public welfare. The punchayet is not an institution in this district."

26. No mention is made of punchayets in the Howrah report.

PRESIDENCY DIVISION.

No. 2JC, dated Calcutta, the 28th March 1873.

From—LORD H. ULICK BROWNE, Commissioner of the Presidency Division,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I HAVE the honor to reply to your circular No. 22, dated the 15th July last, on the subject of the indigenous agency employed in the late census and the position of munduls and other village notables.

THE 24-PERGUNNAHS.

2. I. *Indigenous Agency.*—It can hardly be said that any indigenous agency, as such, was employed in the 24-Pergunnahs. It is true that the village chowkidars supplied information to the police and that a large number of village munduls acted as enumerators, but these chowkidars and munduls cannot justly be termed an agency for a census or any other similar work. These indigenous institutions might perhaps serve as a basis on which to form some such agency, but even this is doubtful. The attempt would have to be made cautiously and tentatively.

3. I enclose a full and able report* by Mr. Verner, Joint-Magistrate of the 24-Pergunnahs, on the points raised in the Government circular, from which it will be seen that the village headmen are not only the representatives of the lower classes, but are chosen by those classes from among themselves. In the development of these munduls into an agency of the sort required, their character, as the representatives of the lower orders, would probably change, and they might soon become nothing more than Government subordinates. They might in fact become something quite different from what they are now, and the term "*indigenous agency*" would cease to be applicable to them.

4. II. *Classes of Agents who were from their professional knowledge useful in the Census.*—Among the various agents employed in this district in the late census, there are but three kinds who, in virtue of their position or employment, were specially fitted for the task. These are—

- (1) Village munduls.
- (2) Zemindaree gomastahs and naibs.
- (3) Village chowkidars.

The small landowners, tenants, cultivators, shop-keepers, writers, and others, who formed the bulk of the enumerators, were chosen on account of their special aptitude, but this aptitude was due not so much to their calling as to their individual circumstances.

The village chowkidars were of much use to the police in supplying information and in other ways, but they were scarcely ever

employed for the actual enumeration. They are uneducated and therefore unfit to be enumerators.

Many zemindaree gomastahs and naibs served as enumerators; but of the three classes that I have mentioned, the village munduls alone were extensively employed in the actual enumeration. Mr. Verner's inquiry has shown that out of 3,839 enumerators employed in twenty-seven out of the thirty thannahs composing the 24-Pergunnahs, 880 were village munduls.

5. III. *Village Officers*.—The only village officers in the 24-Pergunnahs are (1) village munduls and (2) village chowkidars.

Gomastahs and Naibs.—Zemindaree gomastahs and naibs cannot be regarded as officers or servants of the village. They are the private servants of the zemindars, and they, as a rule, look to his interests only after their own.

Punchayets.—There are in the 24-Pergunnahs no standing punchayets, but the reference of trifling quarrels and caste disputes to punchayets constituted for the single occasion is common enough. I believe that this is the case over the greater part of the districts of Bengal and Behar in which I have served.

Putwarees, Canoongoes, and Surburakars.—There are no putwarees in the 24-Pergunnahs, and it seems doubtful whether there ever have been any: there are no canoongoes. The word "surburakar" is sometimes used to denote a manager, generally of landed property; but it does not denote any special institution in this district.

Chowkidars.—The village chowkidars is an institution which, though diseased, is still full of vitality. Its constitution is so well known that it is perhaps only necessary to remark that the persons proposed as village chowkidars are nominated by the villagers, generally with the approval of the zemindar or his agents, and are appointed by the District Superintendent. I have reason to believe that it is the case in the 24-Pergunnahs as in many other districts, that the chowkidar has often been chosen from the class in the village that bears the worst character, and has been in some cases, it is said, a thief by reputation. The District Superintendent of the 24-Pergunnahs has clothed his chowkidars in a sort of blouse uniform with a belt and badge.

Village Munduls.—Village munduls still exist everywhere throughout the 24-Pergunnahs as a village institution. For details regarding their position and powers, I request reference to Mr. Verner's report already mentioned, which shows that the mundul is chosen by the villagers; that the post is hereditary; that the eldest son succeeds, though if a younger be decidedly more fitted for the post he may oust his elder brother; that the zemindar has no voice in the appointment, and very rarely receives any *salami* or other succession fee; and that, ordinarily, there is only one mundul to one village, though there are numerous exceptions to this rule,—sometimes many munduls being appointed to the one village, and more rarely one mundul to several villages. Mr. Verner points out that the village munduls are chosen by the lower classes of the community from among themselves, and in corroboration of this he gives a table showing the religions and castes of all the village munduls in the 24-Pergunnahs, from which it appears that with very few exceptions all the Hindu munduls belong to low

castes. Mr. Verner then goes on to consider the influence and functions of village munduls, and after pointing out that their only sanction is the public opinion of the village, he gives a few instances of their decisions in petty disputes. He then discusses their relations with the regular police, and notices some of their miscellaneous functions. He states that the post is generally unremunerated, but that at some ceremonies the village mundul is treated as an honored guest, and occasionally receives small presents. He thinks that the present decline in the position and power of the village mundul is the result rather of our form of administration than of the encroachments of zemindars. Mr. Verner has added to his report a note embodying some opinions as to the history and origin of the village munduls in the 24-Pergunnahs.

NUDDEA.

6. I. *Indigenous Agency*.—Excepting the village chowkidars no indigenous agency was employed in the census in the district of Nuddea. The village chowkidars were useful in carrying forms and letters of appointment, but they were not fit to be employed as enumerators. The village mundul was often employed as an enumerator, but this not in virtue of his post as village mundul, but as being the most suitable person in the village. Where a better man was forthcoming the village mundul was set aside, the object being rather a correct census than uniformity in the agency employed.

7. II. *Others who from their calling in life were useful*.—As in the 24-Pergunnahs, land agents were the only other class of persons, in addition to the village chowkidars and munduls, who, from their calling, were useful in the census. They were often employed as enumerators, and the landlords lent encouragement to this.

8. III. *Village Officers*.—The village officers are the village mundul and the village chowkidar. Village punchayets are formed to settle disputes and village questions, but do not exist in a permanent form.

There are no putwarees, adhikaries, mehaldars, or other similar officers. Though there is a gomastah or other agent of the landlord to each village, these agents cannot be regarded as officers or servants of the village in the same sense as the chowkidars and munduls. They belong to a different system, one of the prominent features of which is the landlord permanently absent from his post.

Mr. Oldham remarks that every respectable well-to-do cultivator is called a mundul in a Mussulman village, so that there may be twenty of them among two or three hundred inhabitants. He reports that the title of mundul is not necessarily hereditary, and that it is either self-assumed by the individual who bears it, or is conferred by the informal consensus of his fellow-villagers as a tribute to his years, character, or standing.

JESSORE.

9. The only surviving indigenous agency that could be of use in the census was the village chowkidar. He was utilized in carrying forms and other similar work. The village mundul was very often the

enumerator of his village, but Mr. Monro considers that in Jessore he does not exist as the holder of a hereditary office, or as a remnant of the old village system, but is simply the man who for the time being has the most power in the village. Mr. Monro thus attributes the employment of village munduls not to their position as mundul, but to the accident of their having other advantages.

There are no standing punchayets nor putwarees in Jessore.

10. I have no detailed information before me for the districts of Nuddea and Jessore similar to that supplied for the 24-Pergunnahs, and it is therefore difficult to test the accuracy of the reports received from those districts. The points of difference between these districts and the 24-Pergunnahs, as shown by the local officers, are striking. Mr. Verner's report would show that the post of village mundul is nearly always hereditary, while the Collectors of Nuddea and Jessore have reported for their districts to the contrary effect. In the 24-Pergunnahs the general rule is that there is only one village mundul, and that he is a member of the poorer classes; while in Nuddea it would appear that it is quite a common thing to find twenty munduls in a village of two or three hundred inhabitants, and in Jessore the man who has the most power in the village is said *ipso facto* to be village mundul. For the 24-Pergunnahs it would appear that though unencouraged and perhaps repressed by our system of government, the village mundul is still a living institution; while from the reports of the local officers the very reverse might be inferred for Nuddea and Jessore.

11. In the case of the 24-Pergunnahs, inquiries were specially made, at the cost of much time and trouble, by Mr. Verner; whereas in the other two districts no special inquiries were made, each Magistrate reporting what was known by himself personally, and what came to light during the census operations. Thus it may be that special inquiries in the course of a cold weather tour might bring to light more complete information in the case of Nuddea and Jessore; but I can quite understand there being in such matters a good deal of difference in different districts, though I should not have expected so much between the 24-Pergunnahs and Nuddea.

12. With reference to Government letter No. 1, dated 4th February 1873, no general report was sent to the Inspector-General of Registration by the Officiating Commissioner, but only the letters received from the Magistrates of Nuddea and Jessore, the contents of which are given above.

13. In conclusion I desire to acknowledge the assistance I have received from Mr. Verner, who not only went thoroughly into the question as regards the 24-Pergunnahs, but has also assisted me materially in the preparation of this report.

Dated Calcutta, the 30th December 1872.

From—W. H. VERNER, Esq., Offg. Joint-Magistrate, 24-Pergunnahs.

I HAVE the honor to report for this district on the points raised in circular No. 22 of the Government of Bengal, dated the 16th July last.

2. That circular calls for—

- I. An enumeration of the various indigenous agents employed in the census operations.
- II. An explanation of the origin, history, and present state of the village headmen, munduls, mukhyas, pradhans, or other village notables or officials thus employed.
- III. Information as to whether village headmen, one or two generations ago, (a) were much more general, (b) occupied a better-defined and established position than now, (c) and have suffered decadence owing to the increasing and more centralized power of the zemindars.
- IV. Information as to (a) whether the village headmen are the representatives or remnants of an ancient institution; (b) and whether they are in practice more or less hereditary, or are practically elected by the people or nominated by the zemindar, or how they obtain their status.
- V. Information as to (a) what is the position and authority of the village headmen; (b) and whether they hold continuously, or are dismissed and changed at pleasure.
- VI. Whether there is generally only one or several munduls in a village.

The information that I have been able to collect is sufficient to answer these questions conclusively *for this district*, with the exception of the explanation as to their origin and history, and the information as to whether they are representatives or remnants of an ancient institution. To determine these questions a reference to old books and records would be essential, and I have not sufficient knowledge of Bengali literature to know whether it contains the necessary information.

3. The first thing required is an enumeration of the various indigenous agents employed in the census. There was, I believe, only one class of indigenous agents employed, namely, the village munduls. The village chowkidars were indirectly employed to some extent, but I believe that the circular is not intended to call for information about them. I have been unable to get figures showing how far the village munduls were utilized in the census operations in thannahs Baraset and Joynuggur; and as regards thannah Areadah, it is to be observed that there are no village munduls in the seven villages to the north of Calcutta that compose it; but in the remaining 27 thannahs of this district it appears that there were 3,839 enumerators employed, and of these 880 were village munduls, that is, between one-fourth and one-fifth of the whole number. The figures that I have been able to collect through the police show that in some thannahs they were much utilized as an enumerating agency, while in others they were not. In the thannah of Debipore, 195 out of 215 enumerators were village munduls; in the 'sudder thannah, out of 118 enumerators 53 were village munduls; in Nawabgunge there were 46 village munduls in 74 enumerators; in Atchipore, 48 in 112; in Degunga, 31 out of 91; in Kalinga, 87 out of 206; in Assasuni, 35 out of 91; and in Diamond Harbour, 42 out of 156.

On the other hand, in Sonapore there were only 2 out of 73; in Husnabad there were 6 out of 74; in Harwa, 16 out of 121; in

Satkhira, 9 out of 147; in Kaligunge, 21 out of 207; in Barripore, 7 out of 233; in Canning, 3 out of 70; in Pertabnuggur, 4 out of 62; and in Bankipore, 17 out of 316. The total number of village munduls, the total number of enumerators, and the proportion of the enumerators who were village munduls, are given in the following table for all the thannahs in the district:—

THANNAHS.	Total number of village munduls.	Total number of enumerators.	Enumerators who were village munduls.
Taligunge	110	118	53
Bistopore	302	183	17
Sonapore	99	73	2
Atchipore	153	112	48
Areadaha	0	.....†	0
Uriapara	150	100	10
Dum-Dum	60	94*	11
Nawabgunge	57	74	46
Baraset†††
Tababeria	275	199	34
Nyehatty	162	162	40
Deganga	114	91	31
Buseerhat	250	131	24
Kalinga	331	206	87
Hosnabad	102	74	6
Harwa	121	121	16
Satkhira...	175	147	9
Kaligunge	250	207	21
Assasuni	255	91	35
Magoorah	62	102	26
Kalarooah	184	216	50
Baruipore	295	233	7
Jainuggur	684	127†
Canning	60	70	3
Pertabnuggur	152	62	4
Diamond Harbour	240	156	42
Debipore	215	215	195
Sooltanpore...	398	284	30
Bankipore	397	316	17
Mathurapore	185	153	16

* Of these 50 for cantonments.

† Not ascertained.

These figures have been got through the police, but I think they may be accepted as generally correct. In the case of Atchipore, Dum-Dum, Deganga, and Kalarooah, there is extraneous evidence to show that many of the village munduls were enumerators. The figures from Debipore differed so much from those for the other thannahs that I requested a fresh return, but those re-submitted gave the same results.

4. The next thing required is an explanation of the origin, history, and present state of the village munduls. The note appended to this report contains the different opinions that I have been able to collect regarding their origin. As these opinions are almost unsupported by any facts, I do not include them in this report.

Of their history I can say nothing, except that their power seems to have been greater formerly than now.

I will now describe, as far as I can, the present state of the village munduls in this district.

First, as to the mode in which a man becomes a village mundul. The office is hereditary, as I shall show further on, and therefore

ordinarily there is no election by the people or appointment by the zemindar. But in the case of a new village, or where a village mundul dies without near surviving male relatives, it becomes necessary to choose a village mundul. How is he chosen, and by whom? The choice lies with the villagers, and my inquiries would show that the zemindar has no voice in the matter. There is no formal assembly for his election, though in many cases the principal villagers meet and discuss the question. They fix on some man as fit for the post, and in a short time he is recognized as village mundul. In other cases, however, it would appear that he gets the title tacitly and without any meeting of villagers. He is a man of some importance and capacity among the lower orders, and by degrees he becomes their village mundul.

But ordinarily the post is hereditary. I have before me the names of 985 village munduls, and it would appear that in the case of 913 of these the father was village mundul, and in the case of 861 the grandfather was village mundul. It is in Hosnabad, Harwa, Canning, Portabnuggur, and Mathurapore, that we chiefly find village munduls whose fathers and grandfathers have not been village munduls. This was to be expected, for many new villages have sprung up in the Soonderbun lots in these thannahs. In proof of the hereditary nature of the post, I find one village of which the mundul is only nine years old, but here there is no thought of appointing another person more fit for the office.

Generally the post goes by primogeniture, the eldest son succeeding his father; this rule is however very far from absolute. If a younger son shows better qualifications than the eldest, the latter is sometimes set aside. A younger son who could read and write would be preferred to his elder brother who could not.

In villages where the post is hereditary the zemindar never interferes. In new villages the zemindar's gomastah has sometimes a powerful voice in the selection of the village mundul, but this is due to his legitimate influence as one of the leading persons of the village rather than to any fear of his invoking the interference of the zemindar.

It would appear that the receipt of *salami* by the zemindar from a village mundul newly installed has been known in the Satkhira subdivision, but in the rest of the district the zemindar gets no fees in such a case. In no case do the regular police appoint or confirm village munduls, nor are they ever consulted about the appointment. I find a case in Bistopore where a village mundul during his lifetime transferred the headship to his cousin, who thenceforth was village mundul.

The general rule is that there is one mundul to each village and one village only to each mundul, but there are many exceptions to this. I have before me the names of 908 villages with 985 village munduls. In 679 villages there is 1 mundul to 1 village; in 75 villages, 2 munduls to each village; in 20 villages, 3 munduls to each village; in 8 villages, 4 munduls to each village; in 1 village, 5 munduls to the village; and in 2 villages, 6 munduls to each village. In the case of 58 villages, there is 1 mundul to 2 villages; in the case of 18 villages, 1 to 3 villages; and in the case of 24 villages, 1 to 4 villages. In one case there are 2 munduls for 2 villages jointly; in three cases, 2

munduls for 3 villages jointly; in one case, 2 munduls for 4 villages jointly; and in two cases, 3 munduls for 5 villages jointly. In 5 villages there are no munduls.

The plurality of munduls in the one village is sometimes due to the fact that there are, and have been for generations, two or more factions in the village, sometimes to there being one mundul for Hindus and one for Mahomedans; and sometimes to the village being large or scattered, or divided into several separate quarters. On the other hand, where a small village adjoins a large one, there often is only one mundul for the two; and where several small villages lie together, only one for the lot.

The question presents itself, from what classes are village munduls chosen? Are these village headmen selected from the gentry of the country? My inquiries would show exactly the contrary; they are part of the people themselves. The following table, which shows the castes of all the village munduls in this district, those in thannah Baraset alone excepted, will serve to illustrate this:—

Religion and Caste.				Number.
Hindu—Pôd	...	...	...	1,569
„ Koiburtha	...	...	...	670
„ Tior (or Tiya)	...	...	...	214
„ Gwala	...	...	...	202
„ Chundal	...	...	...	152
„ Bagdi	...	...	...	146
„ Chassa Dhoba	...	...	...	107
„ Kapali	...	...	...	77
„ Satgope	...	...	...	67
„ Kaora	...	...	...	55
„ Jogi	...	...	...	44
„ Kolu	...	...	...	34
„ Soory	...	...	...	27
„ Kamar	...	...	...	24
„ Napit	...	...	...	21
„ Tabya	...	...	...	16
„ Teli	...	...	...	14
„ Koomar	...	...	...	12
„ Shukli Tanti	...	...	...	10
„ Bairagi	...	...	...	10
„ Brahman	...	...	...	9
„ Dhopa	...	...	...	8
„ Muchi	...	...	...	8
„ Barui	...	...	...	7
„ Subarna Barnik	...	...	...	8
„ Rajpoot	...	...	...	6
„ Hari	...	...	...	6
„ Kayastha	...	...	...	4
„ Dolui	...	...	...	3
„ Karunga	...	...	...	2
„ Moira	...	...	...	2
„ Buna	...	...	...	2

Religion and Caste.				Number.
• Hindu—Gando Banik	...	...	...	1
„ Dome	...	...	...	1
„ Pekher	...	...	...	1
„ Murdagarash	...	...	...	1
„ Chutar	...	...	...	1
„ Neko	...	...	...	1
„ Ramni Behara	...	...	...	1
Mussalmans	...	...	...	2,262
Christians	...	...	...	13
Total				5,818

It is to be observed here that among 3,543 village munduls of Hindu or quasi-Hindu religion, there are only nine Brahmans and four Kyasths.* This is the strongest confirmation of what is known to me by experience, namely, that though in many cases the village mundul is better off than his neighbours, he is himself one of the labouring classes, and is entirely identified in interests and feeling with those classes. Whatever he may have been in old days, he is now the representative of the lower orders.

It is a noticeable fact that scarcely any village can be found without its recognized mundul. A village in the Dum-Dum sub-division has virtually become two villages, from being intersected by the Eastern Bengal Railway. The old mundul has held his office for the eastern portion, but during the last few years a new mundul has been recognized for the western part. I have already referred to five villages as having no village mundul, but three of these are either in or close to the Dum-Dum cantonments, and have thus ceased to be rural communities. Similarly, in many villages near Calcutta there is no village mundul. It will be observed from the table given in the last paragraph that two Bunas are village munduls, and this would show that the institution easily commends itself to the foreigners from the western highlands who have migrated here.

Now, to consider the influence and functions of the village munduls. From what I have already noted it might be inferred that the village munduls have but little influence with the upper classes, that is to say, with those classes who do not live by hard manual labour, and this is the case. Their influence, *ceteris paribus*, is in a direct ratio to the distance of the villages from towns, high roads, and waterways. It is in the more purely rural tracts that the village mundul has still power. He decides in small boundary disputes, in quarrels between village cliques, and sometimes in domestic differences, such as those arising out of counter-claims by inordinate members of a family to property held jointly. He is also said in some parts of the Satkhira, Barripore, Baraset, and Diamond Harbour sub-divisions, to interfere in questions of caste; while I learn that in other parts of the district he has no special voice in matters of this sort. He often seems to have but little separate authority; so that when any question, such as those I have

* These 13 munduls are found in three thannahs.

referred to, arises, his function is to call together some respectable persons to consider it. Of course, under these circumstances his own influence varies according to his personal qualities. There are some village munduls who in such cases virtually decide the matter at issue according to their own way of thinking, their influence being great; while others have but little more bright than the other members of their punchayet. The mundul has no way of enforcing his decisions but the public opinion of the village. In the course of my official experience several cases have come before me judicially about which the village mundul had previously had his say. In these cases his decisions had finally been disregarded; but there are a large number of small cases in which it is accepted, and the interposition of the civil or criminal courts is not procured. It is not easy to show the exact mode of interference of village munduls, for the fear prevails that as their authority does not meet with the sanction of Government, they might get into trouble for exercising it. I give however three examples, which will illustrate what I have already said about their functions.

(1) Taruk Pramanick and Ishwar Ghose of a village called Tangra had a dispute, about two years ago, as to the exact boundary line between their plots of land. They brought the matter before the village mundul, Ramchand Gwala, who made an inquiry on the spot and fixed the boundaries. After this, things remained quiet until last October, when Taruk Pramanick took exception to a drain that Ishwar Ghose was making in accordance with the boundary line laid down by the mundul. Taruk took advantage of the presence of the landlord, Shib Chundra Rai, in the village to lay the matter before him, and Shib Chundra held that the decision which the village mundul and those associated with him had come to was unjust. The matter thus remained for disposal with the landlord, but he was either too lazy or unable to settle it, and the dispute remains still undecided.

(2) In the same village about four years ago, two brothers, Digumbur and Bissummer, disagreed and resolved to live apart. Their old father chose to live with Bissummer, the younger, on condition that Digumbur should give him his feeding expenses for one-half the year. Digumbur agreed to this, with the proviso that his father was not to work for Bissummer. After some time a dispute arose as to the exact terms of the agreement. The village mundul was referred to and settled it.

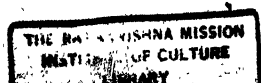
(3) Sarup Ghose, Pitamber Ghose, and Holodhur Ghose of Kristopore, quarrelled some eight years ago about some land. The mundul of the village divided the land as appeared to him equitable, and gave them to understand that if they again fought or disturbed the quiet of the neighbourhood they would be fined. In this he acted with the concurrence of the zemindar. Since then there has been no further dispute.

The village mundul often has a strong voice in the selection of the village chowkidar, whose appointment in this district, however, lies with the police.

For the greater part of the district the police report that they receive assistance and information from the village mundul when they are engaged in local investigations, but from portions of the

sub-divisions of Baraset and Barruipore the police inform me that they get neither assistance nor advice from the village munduls. The sub-inspector of Kolangah reports that they do not help him except when there are rival munduls. The sub-inspector of Bistopore finds that they thwart the police on all occasions, and that any information given by them is invariably false. The sub-inspector of Dum-Dum, an efficient police officer, who has submitted to me a careful report on the subject, informs me that the village mundul habitually assists and is consulted by the police, but also that he is so identified with the villagers that he often looks to their interests more than to the interests of justice. From the Baraset thannah the report is much to the same effect. From the Bankipore thannah I learn that they give no more help and are not more consulted than the other villagers. The sub-inspector of Sultanpore thannah reports that the village mundul is almost invariably sent for and questioned, but only those who can be trusted are consulted. This officer's remarks upon them are severe. Translated into English they are to the following effect :—"The mundul in this southern country interferes in matters relating to marriages and shradhs, and settles disputes arising therefrom. In conjunction with gomastahs, chowkidars, and persons of influence in the village, he determines petty quarrels arising out of disputes about shares in property, improper conceptions, illicit amours, and abortions, and often conceals evidence in cases both heinous and petty. Often when a quarrel begins, by exciting the anger and fears of the peasants he fosters civil and criminal suits, and the result is that he achieves his own object after harassing both sides. The lower orders generally blindly follow the village mundul and his associates already mentioned, and even though they be led to jail or other ruin by them, will not blame or disobey them. The budmashes are generally subject to the village munduls, through whose help alone they are able to digest their ill-got gains. When the police go to a neighbourhood, the munduls of their own accord introduce themselves, volunteer information and advice, and make a show of upholding their position as village munduls; but nevertheless they, along with the chowkidars, leading villagers, and the gomastah, frequently conspire to conceal the real facts from the police: with their co-operation the police could easily discover the real facts, but against them they are often powerless to do so. In the Nawab's time the village munduls had great power, so much so that they could decide about any dispute that might arise in their village. But now-a-days the village munduls in this part of the country have no such power, and to do anything they are obliged to ally themselves with the chief peasants, the gomastah, and the chowkidars. In short, the honor and power of the village munduls have become very small; and most of them are poor and almost landless. They have through their folly by degrees lost all their property, and are now impoverished and chiefly live by meddling in false cases." I have given the opinions of this officer at length, because they represent the most unfavorable view of the village munduls in this district that has come to my notice. The opinion of this officer, as to the way in which they endeavour to thwart the police, leads one to think whether it would not be possible to get them to work with us and whether some change could not be made

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so as to draw these munduls and the principal villagers into closer accord with our executive administration. It may be laid down for the whole district that a police officer on going to a village sends for the village mundul, who has usually the honor of entertaining him during his stay. In some parts of the district the village mundul believes that he is responsible for reporting crime to the police if the village chowkidars through neglect or for any other cause fail to do so.

In many parts of the district it is a common occurrence for the village mundul to stand security for a villager accused of a petty offence, or against whom the zemindar has a claim.

The village mundul often renders assistance in the attachment of property by order of the civil court.

It is, I may say, quite unknown in the district for a zemindar to fine a village mundul in his capacity of village mundul.

The village mundul may be said to get no regular remuneration as mundul. This is true for the whole district. Some of the village munduls in thannah Nyhatti, who derive their descent from village munduls appointed by Rajah Kristo Chundra Rai of Nuddea, point to rent-free lands, fisheries, &c., which they say were allotted to their forefathers in consideration of their rank as village munduls. But generally throughout the district the village munduls do not, in virtue of their post, hold lands rent-free or at low rates, nor is there anything to show that they ever did so. In many parts of the district they are exempt from paying anything towards the support of the village chowkidars. They some times get a few pice at marriages, and also *pán* and *suparis*; and I learn that in Joynuggur there is a fixed rate for these offerings at marriages in rural villages, namely, two *suparis*, five *páns*, and four pice. At many festivals the village mundul is distinguished by the present of a garland and sandal-wood, and he sometimes gets these things on the first rent day* of the year. He is sometimes specially selected for a present of sweetmeats at the worship of the gods. He is, in virtue of his position, often invited to feasts and ceremonies, and he meets with the consideration of the man who is generally consulted by his fellow-villagers.

From what I have said it is evident that the institution of village munduls is widely rooted among the people. Witness the facts that in every new village a village mundul soon appears, and that scarcely any village can be found without a mundul. At the same time it is obvious that his power and position are weak and undefined. His authority is on the wane, and this not by reason of the influence of the zemindars, but owing to the form of executive administration that has grown up under the British Government. It is probable that by degrees his shadowy power, such as it is, will disappear, and then the name will fade away likewise, and village munduls will be at last unknown. Our police and judicial systems, as at present constituted, are hostile to him and his influence.

I have now explained the present state of the village munduls as far as I have been able to gather, and in doing so I have forestalled my answers to the other questions asked by Government, but I will for clearness' sake reply to these categorically.

* The pooniah.

Question.—Were village headmen, one or two generations ago; more general than at present?

Answer.—No, not in this district.

Question.—Did they occupy a better defined and established position than they do now?

Answer.—They did actually and still more so relatively.

Question.—Have they suffered decadence owing to the increasing and more centralized power of the zemindars?

Answer.—Apparently our form of government, judicial and police, is responsible for their decadence, and not the zemindars. I am not prepared to affirm that the relative power of the zemindars has increased in this district.

Question.—Are the village headmen the representatives or remnants of an ancient institution?

Answer.—I cannot answer this. They go back before our rule, but I conceive by “an ancient institution” is meant “an institution dating back several hundred years at least.”

Question.—Are they hereditary?

Answer.—They are.

Question.—Are they practically elected by the people?

Answer.—They are, when from the circumstances hereditary succession is impossible.

Question.—What is the position and authority of the village headmen?

Answer.—The reply to this is given at length above.

Question.—Do they hold continuously, or are they dismissed and changed at pleasure?

Answer.—They hold continuously.

Question.—Is there generally only one, or are there several munduls in a village?

Answer.—Generally only one, though the exceptions to this are very frequent.

I may note here that the radical meaning of the word mundul (*मण्डल*) seems to be circle, and it seems to me likely that the word was first applied to the jurisdiction and afterwards to the office and officer. This is however only conjecture. As a name it is used in two ways,—first, to denote a post, such as village or fouzdarree mundul (though the term “fouzdarree mundul” is scarcely known in the 24-Pergunnahs); and secondly, as a very common name or *upadhi*. In the latter case the brothers and paternal cousins are also called “mundul:” in the former case they are not, except when the name (*upadhi*), as distinct from the title of village mundul, happens to be mundul, which is often the case. The term is used as an *upadhi* equally by Hindus and Mahomedans. With the latter it is, I think, analogous to Sheikh, Khan, &c.; and with the former to Ghose, Bose, &c.

Note on the Origin and History of Village Munduls.

This is little more than a synopsis of the different opinions that I have collected, and these opinions are not based on definite facts or instances, but merely on general tradition or report, except those of the

sub-inspector of Nyhatti, who has apparently been guided by the information given to him by village munduls who spoke of their own forefathers.

Captain Eckford reports that his inquiries show that the village munduls were originally nominated by the zemindars, that the office was hereditary, and that the origin of the title dates from the reign of Akbar, when great changes occurred in the revenue system of the country. His business was to assist the gomastah or rent collector in all fiscal matters, to report occurrences of crime, and to settle disputes among the tenantry. He either got chakran lands or lands at a low rate of rent, and also presents from the people on occasions such as poojahs and marriage.

The Deputy Magistrate of Barnipore, Baboo Mohima Chunder Pal, remarks that the origin of the munduls may be traced to the time of the Mahomedan Government. They may he says have had some influence at that period, but now, as the people are not legally bound to obey them, they only meet with obedience so long as the people regard them as friends and have confidence in them.

Baboo Bejoo Madhub Mookerjee, Deputy Magistrate, Satkhira sub-division, writes as follows :—" The institution of munduls is a very ancient institution, and appears to have been contemporaneous with the Sanscrit village communities. In communities of small proprietors who reclaimed their land from the jungle and had no superior other than the King, the mundul or headman was elected by the villagers from amongst their number. In latter times, when one man by his superior industry or wealth obtained the supremacy in an entire village or township, but happened to reside at a different place, he appointed (generally at the recommendation of the residents) a mundul to represent him. * * * * * There does not appear to have been any legal basis for the authority of the mundul, but only a social and moral one. * * * * * Though only a shadow of the old institution remains at this day, the mundul is by far the ablest and the most intelligent and influential resident of the village."

Baboo Hem Chunder Kur, Deputy Magistrate, believes that the King had the appointment and dismissal of the village mundul, but that in course of time, as the rank became hereditary, though nominally an officer of the crown, he was rather the representative of the people. In later times the election rested with the village community. As remuneration, he held a quantity of rent-free land, the gift of the landlord, and sometimes received an allowance from the King's coffers. He was held responsible for the village and used to settle the sum payable to the King, and apportioned it among the villagers according to the extent and fertility of their lands. The collection of the rent and its despatch to the Government fiscal offices devolved on him. He eventually became the mouthpiece of the village.

The sub-inspector of the Nyhatti station, by name Raj Kristo Sen, has sent in a careful report on the subject of village munduls, from which I extract the following :—

" The time when this title (village mundul) had its first origin cannot be exactly ascertained. In the jurisdiction of this police station it is traceable as far back as the time of Rajah Krishna Chandra Roy,

by-whom the title appears to have been first conferred. Rajah Krishna Chundra Roy lived at Krishnaghur, Nuddea district, about the middle of the 18th century, and was the proprietor of an extensive zemindaree. It is apparent that the title was first conferred by him only on the principal men of the village who were intelligent and able to read and write. What the original functions of these munduls were, or the nature of the service they had to render to the Rajah, it is difficult at present to ascertain; but as the title is still much respected by the ordinary classes of men in the villages, and as in questions of public matters they still resort to the mundul to obtain his advice, and generally abide by it, however affecting them, it appears that the privileges which accompanied this title were at first very great, as so long an interval has not been able to obliterate the impressions of rank and power connected with the office." The sub-inspector then points out that at that time there was no systematic plan observed for the collection of revenue, that there was no system of receiving complaints from the ryots and redressing their wrongs, and that owing to poverty, bad roads, and robbers, it was difficult for an ordinary peasant to go to Krishnaghur; and he infers that on these grounds the Rajah appointed these village munduls to watch the interests of the village communities and to check the oppressions of his servants. He also thinks it probable that they were to a great extent used as an agency for the collection of revenue and for disposing of ordinary disputes. His inquiries show that at that time each mundul had a circle containing about twenty villages under him. He remarks that the real munduls, by which he means those who hold the post by an hereditary title derived from Rajah Krishna Chundra Roy, are nearly all Mussulmans. Some of these munduls, as I have remarked in the body of the report, point to rent-free lands, tanks, &c., as having been given to their forefathers by the Rajah in virtue of their position as munduls.

The sub-inspector of the Dum-Dum thannah, Gouri Puddo Chuckerbutty, remarks that the title of mundul was given in the time of Mahomedan rule to villagers in the interior who could make themselves useful. At that time the title was one of much significance, and munduls were not so numerous as now. There was scarcely one mundul in a circuit of 20 miles. But subsequently they were appointed to every village, and compelled to perform specific duties. The sub-inspector alleges that it was the rough treatment received by them in the performance of these duties at the hands of the officers of the Mahomedan Government that engendered a horror of the post on the part of the higher classes, so that at this day the post is only held by persons of the lower orders.

This is all the information I have been able to collect. In my personal inquiries, when I have asked how any particular man came to be village mundul, the reply has been that his father was before him.

That there were headmen in the ancient Hindu village communities is well known; but to assert that the mundul is a remnant of them, is a very different thing. The information before me would rather tend to show that the mundul was originally a very different officer, and that it was only subsequently that he became assimilated to the village headman.

W. H. VERNER,

Offg. Joint-Magistrate.

RAJSHAHYE DIVISION.

No. 145Ct., dated Camp Nitpore, the 24th January 1873.

From—E. W. MOLONY, Esq., Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division,
To—The Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal, General Department.

WITH reference to your circular No. 22, dated 19th July last, I have the honor to submit below an abstract of the reports submitted by the district officers regarding the indigenous agency brought to light in the course of the census operations.

2. *Moorshedabad*.—The institution of village munduls is general throughout this district. The munduls of former generations exercised far greater powers than the persons who now bear that name exercise. One of the chief reasons for this is, the Magistrate considers, the increasing and the more centralized powers of the zemindar as stated in the letter calling for the report; and another reason he believes to be that in many of the agricultural villages in the interior there are now persons unconnected with agriculture who held a social position far higher than that of village mundul, and over whom the latter exercise no authority whatever.

3. From the above the Magistrate says that it does not follow that the mundul of the village is the most substantial ryot, as in some cases the present holder of the office may have acquired it by descent; while the lands which may, in the case of his ancestor, have made him the headman of the village have passed away from his family. In extreme cases of this kind a man is titular mundul only, as he found in one case that the grandfather of a man who was a mundul had been a man of comparative wealth, but that the lands had melted away, and that though the grandson is still called a muldul after his ancestor, another person had been appointed by the ryots and was the real mundul of the village.

4. As a general rule, the mundul's appointment is hereditary. A mundul who has a son of good character and intelligence, and of sufficient age to undertake the duties, would, at his death, be succeeded by that son. It is further stated by some that if a mundul's son is a minor at the time of his death, the minor son succeeds to the office on his obtaining age, and that during his minority some of his relatives perform his duty.

5. The reports received by the Magistrate are conflicting as to the authority by which a mundul is appointed. The sub-divisional officers at Kandhee and Jungipore informed him that the zemindar appoints, but from inquiries he has found that the ryots have a very considerable voice in the matter, if they have not the exclusive right of appointment.

6. The powers of the munduls are stated to have been considerably curtailed and their emoluments reduced. In one village the

Magistrate found that the mundul enjoyed two beegahs of land rent-free ; but such cases, he states, are exceptional. As a general rule, a mundul is treated more leniently than other ryots in the matter of rates, and that at the time of the *pooniah* (the first day on which the rents of a new year is collected) he has the privilege of paying his rent first, and of receiving from the landlord a garland and some sweetmeats.

7. In villages which belong to several proprietors there are, as a rule, as many munduls as there are proprietors, and each mundul performs the business connected with his office of the share of his employés in the village.

8. Besides the mundul there are in some villages some persons called "kotals." This person occupies a far inferior position. The word "kotal" is said to be a corruption of the Sanscrit word "koshapala," which means a warder, and it is supposed that the ancestors or former representatives of the present kotals held the office of warder under the ancient Hindu Kings, and were remunerated by grants of lands. Some of the existing kotals still hold lands, and are generally of the same position as chowkidar.

9. There are no punchayets in this district regularly established. When any question of caste, or the division of family property, or the like, arises, a punchayet is formed, of which the mundul is naturally a member. As a rule the decisions of the punchayets are respected.

10. There are also no putwarees in this district in the sense in which the word is used in the old regulations. The present putwarees are servants of the zemindars employed in collecting rent from the ryots.

11. No traces of the old police organization are found to exist in this district except the kotals. The existing kotals are stated by the Magistrate to be generally of a low position and of deficient intelligence, and to have been of no use in taking the census.

12. *Dinagpore*.—The Magistrate of this district states that he has fully reported in his No. 137, dated 10th May last (which has been sent in original to the Inspector-General of Registration with this office No. 44, dated 14th June following), the part taken by the putwarees and munduls in the census operations. The position of these persons in this district, which remains to be stated, is given by the Magistrate as follows.

13. The management of zemindarees in the interior is much in the hands of these officials. Without their co-operation a zemindar finds difficulty in collecting rents ; they are therefore considered persons of importance.

14. The employment of these persons is a very old institution, being a remnant of the system, which existed before the accession of the English to the government of this country for the collection of revenue and internal management of the country. At the present day their duties have become merged and lost in newer forms of administration, and their powers have decayed and their influence diminished.

15. Under the Mahomedan rule, among the subordinate agents employed by Government for collecting rent from the cultivators, the putwarees and munduls occupied an important position. The putwaree was the village accountant, to whom the ryots looked for the proper adjustment and record of the demands against them, and to whom the

zemindars looked for the realization of his dues ; and the mundul, who derived his right to his position from having settled the village or being the headman, was entrusted with the duty of promoting cultivation, and thus increasing the profits.

16. Both these classes of persons were in former times paid either by a fixed money remuneration, or by being allowed to hold lands at reduced rates. The former was the custom in this district, and in consequence these officials are stated to have connived at the fabrication of accounts, as the Magistrate states that the Collector, at the time of the decennial settlement, complained that the ryots at that period held more lands than they were entitled to, and that they could afford to pay extortionate cesses.

17. In this district the putwarees of those days had power and authority only as civil officers ; but the mundul exercised criminal powers also, as they fined persons for petty thefts and other minor cases, and generally settled disputes of the community over which they presided. In this district, where there are still plenty of waste lands fit for cultivation, and where the powers of the zemindars have not become so centralized as elsewhere, traces of this old system still exist.

18. At the present day a putwaree is appointed by the zemindar for each circle. His duty is to keep the accounts of collections within his jurisdiction. He is not always a villager, though very often the same person is putwaree as well as mundul. He is generally paid by a percentage on the collection, and being the zemindar's agent, he exercises no authority except what he derives from virtue of his office. The villagers have no voice in his election.

19. But the mundul, who is to be found in every village of whatever size, is the representative of a particular community, and is a resident of the village of which he is a representative. He is appointed by the villagers subject to the confirmation of the zemindar, who rarely refuses to confirm a person chosen by the public voice. His office is also not hereditary or permanent, as the villagers have a right to nominate another person for the office of mundul, if not satisfied with the conduct of the person holding the office.

20. The mundul is paid by a small sum yearly by the zemindar, and he has the privilege of not paying any cess or any increased rent, and in return he assists the putwaree in collecting the rent, and to induce the ryots to bring waste lands into cultivation, &c., and to give information of crime to the police. The villagers are not bound to pay him anything, but as a token of respect they very often pay him small amounts in money or kind. Generally, the position of trust occupied by the mundul is supposed to be a sufficient remuneration, as he is the person who is appealed to by the ryots in cases of emergency.

21. In disputes regarding land, the mundul disposes of the matter unaided ; but in all other cases he generally calls in the aid of a punchayet, he himself being a member. The punchayet is composed of the pradhans of the village, that is to say, the persons of the village who bear, in the estimation of the community, the highest character for respectability and trustworthiness. Before this meeting of the pradhans, the cases now generally settled are those relating to caste disputes or involving family honor ; and when the meeting has heard and decided

the case in the presence of the assembled villagers, if either party is fined, the mundul realizes the fine, and expends it in providing a feast for the principal villagers.

22. With respect to this district, it is the opinion of the Magistrate that the authority which the munduls and the village punchayets exercise has kept the criminal courts free from a multitude of petty cases which encumber the courts of other districts, and he trusts that it may be long before the powers of these officials are curtailed; a punchayet is more likely to become acquainted with the real facts of a case and to do substantial justice than any criminal court.

23. *Maldah*.—The indigenous agency employed in this district has also been reported to the Inspector-General of Registration in this office No. 103, dated 20th June last. Some additional information given by the Magistrate on this subject is given below.

24. The system of munduls and satooms has existed in this district from the time of the Mahomedan reign. A satoom is a head ryot. At the present time every village has a mundul, and in large villages there are two or three satooms under the mundul.

25. The mundul is appointed by the zemindar with the concurrence of the ryots. His office is not hereditary, unless there be any person among his relatives, in which case preference is given to him. Generally he holds his office continuously, but is liable to dismissal at the pleasure of the zemindar.

26. The mundul occupies an influential position among the village community, but in the more civilized parts of the district his influence now-a-days is much less, and his authority more defined, than they used to be. The ryots in these parts have become more independent of the control of the mundul than they were before, and the increasing and more centralized powers of the zemindars and the accessibility of the courts of justice have decayed their authority. In the more remote and less populous parts of the district, however, such as the "Borin" to the east of the Mohanuddee, the mundul still continues to hold more of his former recognized position. This, the Magistrate states, is especially the case with the Pales in thannah Gazole, among whom the headmen or sirdars have, to the present day, a recognized position in the village communities.

27. There is no established village institution such as village punchayet. A punchayet is however assembled, and a meeting convened, both among Hindus and Mahomedans, as occasion arises, that is to say, when any question of caste is to be decided. The members of a punchayet are selected entirely by the persons interested from those of their own castes.

28. With respect to putwarees, the Magistrate repeats his previous remark that they are not to be found as an institution; that the system has long since died out and given place to the village zemindaree gomastahs and tehsildars; and he adds that the zemindars have discontinued the practice of filing returns of putwarees since 1851; and that at the present time the zemindar appoints and dismisses the putwaree at pleasure, he being a servant of the zemindar alone.

29. The term "putwaree" is however known and recognized throughout the district. The terms "putwaree" and "tehsildar" are now

synonymous. In the south of the district the term "tehsildar," in the central parts "gomastah," and in the northern parts "putwaree," are the terms generally used for the persons whose duty it is to collect the rents for the zemindar. The office is not hereditary, and a monthly salary is usually attached to it. The duties are simply to collect the rent from the ryots and to make it over to the naib. These officials do not belong to any particular class or caste.

30. No traces of pharidars, fouzders, or buxee, exist in this district. The term "buxee," however, is stated to have been used until late years, and to have been applied to the officer who collected the town chowkidaree, and performed, under the name of "sudder buxee," certain police duties of the nature of those now performed by the town head-constable; but these buxees are not those contemplated in the Government order under reply.

31. *Rajshahye*.—The following indigenous agents were employed in this district in taking the census:— 5300

1st.—Gomastahs, tehsildars, and naibs of zemindars.

2nd.—Punchayets of unions appointed under Act VI (B.C.) of 1870.

3rd.—In places where such punchayets were not easily available, the village headmen.

32. With respect to the first class of persons, the Magistrate states that he has nothing further to say than that they are the appointed and paid servants of the zemindaree local outcherries.

33. The punchayets who assisted in taking the census were also appointed under a special enactment, and as a great majority of them were elected by reason of their previously established position as headmen in the village, the Magistrate states that his remarks about the village headmen are applicable to the punchayets also.

34. In this district there are no officials called mukhyas. The village headmen are however designated by various names, such as munduls, pramaniks, and pradhans. A generation or two ago these village headmen occupied a better position than what they occupy now, as the increasing and the more centralized powers of the zemindars have reduced their influence. In almost every village there are two or more of these headmen according to its size or antecedents; but in different pergunnahs different rules prevail. There is no uniform rule for their appointment or dismissal. Their privileges, position, and the qualifications also for, and the duration of occupation, are quite undefined.

35. In villages where there are no men of the well-to-do educated class and where the population is wholly rural, the general rule is that the mundulship descends from father to son. The son learns from his father the secrets of influence and how to transact business properly for his fellow-villagers with the zemindar and the police. These hereditary headmen manage to keep well with the zemindar and their fellow-villagers, and the zemindar finds it necessary to favor them in order to make convenient terms with the villagers about rents and khuroha. The favor thus shown to them by the zemindar gives them weight and additional influence in the eyes of the villagers, and by the co-operation

of the zemindars and the villagers the permanency and hereditary privileges of the posts are maintained.

36. The duties of these officials are to assist in making collections, to act as confidential advisers of the naib or gomastah, to keep the zemindar informed of all occurrences in the village, to report or to suppress crime, and to hand over or to conceal criminals as directed by the zemindar. This official attends all inquests and searches made in his village, and acts as arbitrator, either alone or with others, in many disputes referred to him. He also regulates social ceremonies and customs, and is distinguished himself as the man chiefly honored by his zemindar on the day when the payment of rent for the year begins.

37. Though primarily the post is hereditary, there is sometimes a break in the line. When a mundul dīz leaving no one to inherit his honors, election is resorted to. In many villages the hereditary nature of the appointment does not also prevail when the inability of the incumbent is apparent, and in such cases the mundul who loses the confidence of his villagers is deposed, and a successor of superior ability and influence is elected. In this election both the zemindar and the villagers have a voice; but much depends on the power and influence of the zemindar, who in many cases carries and enforces his election with a high hand, against which the villagers are powerless. Generally, the zemindar, with good grace, leaves the election to the villagers themselves, acquiesces in their choice, and bestows on the person elected some customary distinction.

38. In a village of any size, there are two to five munduls who act respectively for their own quarters or *paras*; and occasionally, when matters affecting the whole village is involved, they sit in consultation as a punchayet. Their decision is invariably respected.

39. With respect to the origin and the subsequent history of the institution of these village headmen, the Magistrate states that he has been unable to discover or to trace them, as besides the actual officeholders there are so many munduls and pramaniks now existing among the common people that the names themselves are of little help, except as showing that the institution from which the names are derived must have been very old to allow of the existence of so many families of munduls and pramaniks at the present day. It is probable that the present system of village headmen is the remnant of some organized and recognized institutions which existed long before the creation of zemindars.

40. There is no remnant of any such of old police organization as alluded to in paragraph 5 of the Government letter now existing. In some villages within the Nattore sub-division, however, there are few persons called fouzders, but they exercise no authority now in the village in which they live. It is supposed that some of their ancestors served in the army at the time of the Mahomedans, and thus acquired the title.

41. *Rungpore*.—In this district the appellations of the headmen differ according to locality. They are the munduls, putwarees, boshnias, pramaniks, and teshdars, and all of them are designated pradhans. These names or titles existed from the time of the Hindu rule, or the early part of the Mahomedan reign.

42. These headmen possessed more influence in their village than they do now. They were, and at present are, the paid servants of the zemindars, and their duties are to collect the rents and to keep the accounts. The putwaree system was introduced in the latter part of the Mahomedan reign.

43. There are some descendants of the former headmen of the district who still hold their posts, but these are few and far between. They are however liable to be pushed out; and though their posts appear to be hereditary, they are retained as long as they hold the good-will and esteem of the people. In some places they are elected by the ryots, and in others the zemindar appoints the man who appears to be a favourite of the ryots.

44. The title of mundul is transmitted from the father to the son, but the title sometimes drops when the son is incompetent or has become poor. The appointment and dismissal of boshnias are at the pleasure of the zemindar.

45. The headmen are generally chosen from men who are wealthy. They do not belong to any particular caste. In this district they are said to be generally Rajbunsees. Boshnias have fallen in position since the introduction of the putwaree system. They are now simply teshil paiks under the tehsildars and putwarees.

46. There is generally one mundul or headman in every village; but when there are many *paras* or hamlets in a village, the number exceeds more than one.

47. In many villages there are punchayets, consisting chiefly of the pradhans or the headmen. The village barber is sometimes a member of the punchayet, and he receives a sunnud from the zemindar to sit as a punchayet. The punchayets sit and decide cases chiefly concerning religion and caste, and they annually meet to decide what amount should be paid to the zemindar as *chanda* (an illegal cess).

48. Other petty disputes regarding small sums of money lent are also settled by the punchayets, and it is said that in hearing criminal cases a complainant generally excuses the delay in bringing the complaint, saying that he expected the matter to be settled either by the punchayet or the zemindar's *amlah*.

49. The putwarees are village accountants; they collect rent also. The putwaree system is now giving way to the tehsildaree system. In former times there was a putwaree in every village; when formerly there were three putwarees there is now one tehsildar in their place, as the latter enjoys a larger salary and has a larger extent of country to manage. In the two large estates of Bahirbund and Patiladoho belonging to Moharanee Surno Moyee and to the late Baboo Prosunno Coomar Tagore, the system of putwarees has been entirely done away with, their places being supplied by tehsildars, who work on a new system altogether.

50. A putwareeship is not a hereditary appointment. The putwaree is paid by either a fixed salary or by a percentage on the collections. He has also some perquisite. The post is so much coveted in some places in this district that nuzzurs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 500 are said to be paid to the zemindar in order to obtain the post. There is no

particular caste or class to which the putwarees belong; they are however generally Mussulmans and Rajbunsees.

51. The only persons, called fouzders, said by the Magistrate to be existing in the district, are those among the sect of Byragees who receive religious alms; but these are not the fouzders contemplated in the Government order under reply. Some servants of indigo factories and municipal tax collectors are also said to be called buxees. These are also not contemplated in the Government order.

52. *Pubna*.—The unpaid agents employed in taking the census in this district were the village headmen, called munduls, bhonias, and pramaniks. Nothing is known in this district of the origin of these village headmen, but they existed from time immemorial. It is stated that some two or three generations ago these men were very influential and respectable. Village disputes, either affecting the community or any particular individuals, were referred to them for decision; they even exercised judicial powers, and punished persons for crime. Since the decennial settlement, however, the zemindar's powers having increased and become more centralized, and education and civilization having penetrated into the interior, their position and influence are stated to have much diminished.

53. Most of the existing munduls, bhonias, and pramaniks, are said to be the descendants of the former headmen; the Magistrate therefore presumes that they are remnants of an old institution. The title is hereditary; but if a headman dies without issue or is incapacitated by old age or infirmity, his place is filled by election. Any substantial old ryot who possesses sufficient common sense and local knowledge is eligible to the post; but in a village where the Mahomedan population prevails, the nominee must be able to read the Koran. The zemindar has no voice in his election.

54. The duties of these headmen are to settle disputes and to act as representatives for the villagers. When the dispute is settled by the zemindars, the opinion of these headmen is generally consulted. They also assist the tehsildar in collecting rents.

55. The privileges of these headmen are, that they pay rent at a rate less than other ryots, and they are exempt from paying any illegal cess. From the villagers they also receive presents at marriages and other festivals.

56. The number of these headmen varies according to the size of the village. In villages inhabited by Mahomedans they are generally Mahomedans. The punchayet of the village is composed of these village headmen.

57. There are no putwarees in this district; the name is applied, however, to tehsildars of small estates. There are also no phareedars, fouzders, and other remnants of the old police organization.

58. *Bograh*.—The Magistrate states that the village officers now found in his district are of three kinds only,—pradhans, munduls, and putwarees. These are indifferently Hindus and Mussulmans. He has not been able to learn anything about their origin or history, but he says that they appear to him to be remnants of the ancient village system.

59. The large villages have generally both a pradhan and a mundul; in smaller villages the duties are performed by one mundul.

Some villages have a mundul but no pradhan, and some a pradhan but no mundul. Both the mundul and the pradhan are residents of the village, or one of the villages, to which they act as headmen. They both of them allot land to the ryots in communication with the zemindar; they accompany police officers who come to serve a summons or execute a warrant, and in the same way assist the emissaries of the zemindars; and they frequently stand security to the zemindar for a ryot's paying his rent or advance-money, in case of urgency, to enable the ryot to meet his landholder's demands. They receive certain dues of grain, fish, &c., on the occasion of weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies. The pradhan is the higher in position of the two. He is appointed by the ryots, and his office is generally hereditary. He assists the ryots when in difficulty; he appears as representative of the ryots if they are at variance with their zemindar, and disposes in committee of questions relating to caste. The pradhan receives no salary, but often holds his land at easy rates. The mundul is appointed by the zemindar. He obtains in some places a share of the collection charges allowed to the tehsildar, and in others holds a little land rent-free. His duty is to assist in the collection of rents, and his interest is generally that of the zemindar.

60. The putwarees in this district are appointed and dismissed by the zemindar alone. The duty of the putwarees is to keep rent accounts, to collect rents, and grant receipts for the same on behalf of the zemindar. The putwarees belong to a better class than the munduls and pradhans; they are variously remunerated, sometimes by a percentage of Rs. 3 or Rs. 3½ per cent. on the rents they collect, and sometimes by a fixed salary of from Rs. 1 to 3 per mensem, and occasionally they hold a grant of land in lieu of money.

61. There are no standing punchayets; a few leading men are often assembled with the pradhan by the ryots to form a committee when any question of general interest arises.

62. The munduls did most of the census enumeration in his district, and did it well; and he is trying to engage their services within the selected rural area in collecting vital and mortuary statistics. The experiment is likely to be an interesting one, and may possibly lead to their further employment on statistical work.

63. The information given by the district officers with respect to the establishment of these village headmen, being complete as far as it is available, I have nothing to add to the same.

64. The headmen of villages occupy a very important position with reference to the well-being of the ryots, and though their influence seems to be declining with the spread of civilization and the growing opulence of their neighbours, much may still be made of them if their influence is enlisted on the part of district officers.

65. The formation of the punchayets under the Village Chowkidaree Act would appear to have tended in this direction in Rajshahye, where the village officers have been associated with independent and influential residents in the chowkidaree punchayets.

COOCH BEHAR DIVISION.

No. 2153, dated Julpigoree, the 21st September 1872.

From—G. N. BARLOW, Esq., c.s.i., Offg. Commr., Cooch Behar Division,

To—The Offg. Secy. to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of your circular No. 22 of the 16th July last, and to submit the report therein called for in respect to the various districts of this division, district by district. It is true that I am unable to supplement the information supplied by district officers with much personal knowledge of my own, but I trust that no inconvenience may be occasioned by this defect.

2. *District of Darjeeling.*—(a) The only indigenous agency employed in this district in connection with the taking of the census were the jotedars in the terai. As the name indicates, these persons are the holders of jotes, or parcels of land of varying, but usually moderate, dimensions. They existed from the time of the Sikkim Government, but then held a very subordinate and uncertain position, being under the orders of the chowdrees or village collectors, twelve in number. The last class was abolished in 1864, when the country was under British rule, and thenceforward the position of the jotedars has greatly improved, and the right, which is transferable, may be generally described to amount, as at present constituted, to the possession of a ten years' farming lease of land in the terai, with a claim to re-settlement at equitable rates.

(b) Village punchayets, phareedars, fouzders, buxees, and such like, are not known in this district.

(c) Putwarees are to a small extent known in the terai, but they are usually called "sircars," and their functions consist in keeping the accounts of, and collecting the rents and debts due to, the well-to-do jotedars, by whom they are chosen from any caste, provided they can read and write. These putwarees receive as remuneration a sum not exceeding Rs. 5 a month, and according to the general custom they trade in money, lending to the extent of their small means; but they do not keep shops on their own account.

(d) Some other classes of notable persons are mentioned in the Deputy Commissioner's report, and although they are stated to have been unconnected with the census work, and it appears somewhat uncertain whether the terms of your circular require explanation regarding such classes, I give particulars concerning them. These are munduls and sirdars, bhardars and duffadars. The mundul's office, though the term has been introduced from the plains, was also known to the Sikkim Government, when a mundul was called a "chomi." The office is that of headman of the ryots who live in a certain tract.

Formerly the chomi was appointed by the Sikkim Government, but the mundul is now virtually selected by the ryots. In the hills the munduls have lost position and decreased in number, owing, it is said, to the fact that the Lepchas, amongst whom the office existed, have become scattered, and to some extent left the district. On the other hand, the munduls upon the other side of the Teesta, who hold a like office under the Bhutan Government, have lost none of their importance or position under the British Government, and these hold an hereditary office, though liable to dismissal by the district officer.

The offices of sirdar, boidar, and duffadar, originated with the cultivation of tea. The first-named is head of the gang of coolies, and is chosen for pre-eminence either in point of force of character or intellect, or possession of this world's goods; the second office (boidar) is that of keeper of the registers and writer of the sirdar's accounts; and the duffadar represents the head of a section of a gang, and attends to the working parties. A sirdar exercises great influence over his coolies, and though the office nominally descends to his son, the sirdar is practically elected by his coolies.

(c) There are no zemindars in the Darjeeling district.

Julpigoree District.—(a) The Deputy Commissioner reports that on taking charge of this district in January last he found that no actual preparations had been made for taking the census beyond the issue of certain general instructions. He worked the census to the best of his ability, making use of the following agency—(1) police; (2) vakeels and amlah obtained from the offices of Government, the Cooch Behar manager, and the late Mr. Barnes as lessee of the Bykuntapore estate; and (3) paid mohurirs at a total cost of Rs. 619-11-0. Village headmen were employed as enumerators, where such could be found, and they are classed as pradhans and jotedars. These pradhans are thus described:—They are the zemindars' servants, appointed to assist the tehsildars and generally to look after the zemindars' interests. The position of pradhan gives them weight with the villagers, and apart from the small salary sometimes (but not always) given, amounting at the outside to Rs. 3 per mensem, remuneration is obtained in the shape of presents at the times of feasts, &c. The origin of the appointment in early days seems to have been the object of having some person to keep the ryots together in newly-settled tracts, and to see that rents were paid without groundless excuses. The post used to be thought so much of, that it was formerly never given away without a handsome nuzzur to the zemindar, elephants being given by would-be pradhans; the hereditary system prevailed, and the son followed his father in office, provided he was eligible and could give what was considered a sufficient nuzzur by the zemindar. At the present time things have much changed, and the importance of the post has decreased; still the heirs of original wealthy pradhans are to be found holding the office, and it is customary to give the appointment to the eligible heir of a deceased pradhan. Nuzzur is also given at present, but on a much smaller scale than formerly.

The appointment of pradhan rests with the zemindars, who also can dismiss at pleasure.

The latter power is never exercised except on the grounds of incapacity; and when a new man has to be appointed, the opinion of the ryots is to a certain extent consulted, no one being appointed who is not approved of by them. Jotedars are the same class as described under the same name in Darjeeling save that in the permanently settled portion of the Julpigoree district, the long standing of the tenure, and the non-liability to revision of settlement on the part of Government, have given the jotedaree right a highly substantial character.

(b) There are no standing punchayets (so to speak) maintained in this part of the country; the institution is known of course here as elsewhere, but the members are elected for each occasion as necessary, and do not retain any authority in regard to general matters.

(c) Putwarees really do not exist here; two persons bearing that title are appointed in connection with the zemindars' tehsildars in a single pergunnah (Boda) for the purpose of keeping the accounts; but the office is not hereditary, and they are mere mohurirs.

(d) The title of foudjar is found in the Dooars surviving the Bhutea rule, but the office now exists but in name. The duty required was formerly to bring before the ameen or officer below the soubah, in his magisterial capacity, parties in assault cases of dispute in consequence of breach of morality. The appointment was only so far hereditary that an eligible son, if the soubah was so inclined, did occasionally succeed his father. The foudjars as a class could neither read nor write, and were paid by receiving jotes of land.

Gowalparah District.—(a) The indigenous agency employed for the census in this district was as shown in the margin. Regarding these classes the following information is furnished.

Village Headmen.

Munduls.
Mouzadars.
Patgiroes.
Putwarees.
Paryas.

The origin of the village headmen cannot distinctly be traced, but there is no doubt that those found now existing are remnants of the old institutions which prevailed in the district. In early times the zemindars tried probably to appoint one of the more intelligent and influential men from amongst the ryots as mundul, mouzadar, or patgiri in each village for the collection of rents, and to appear before the zemindaree officials, or the zemindars themselves, on behalf of the ryots. The headmen thus selected were authorised by the ryots to act on their behalf; they were allowed a certain percentage (stated to be generally 10 per cent.) on collections made by them, and they had power to decide petty cases, both criminal and civil, with the assistance of the village punchayet.

Putwarees and paryas were appointed by the headmen to aid them, the former as accountant, and the latter as assistant collector of rents,—salary at from Rs. 3 to 5 per mensem being allowed. Paryas were appointed according to the size of the village, a para or section of a village being assigned to the several paryas. None of the above offices appear to have been hereditary, and the holders were always liable to discharge or dismissal for misconduct or other causes. The system thus described is believed to

have existed over the whole of the Gowalparah district originally, but at the present time it continues only in some parts, where again it is gradually dying out with the spread of education and the disposition on the part of zemindars to centralize their power by the appointment of trained collectors under the style of naibs, gomastahs, and mohurirs, &c. There is, where the system prevails, but one headman to each village.

(b) There are no fixed punchayets existing here.

(c) Putwarees have already been spoken of. They exist more or less in four pergunnahs of the district, and belong mostly to the Kolita and Rajbunsee castes. They cultivate lands like other ryots, but do not, it is said, keep shops or lend money.

(d) No remnants of any old police organization are found here.

Garó Hills District.—No census was made here, merely an estimate of the population being supplied. The Deputy Commissioner thus reports that the inquiries made in the Government circular are not applicable to his district.

Cooch Behar State.—The census in this state was taken by the staff of the settlement department, assisted by the establishment of the tehsildar of Rohimgunge, one of its pergunnahs.

(a) There are no village headmen to be found here, as indeed with a few exceptions there are no villages, properly so called, existing. The revenue division of this state is by talooks, the term being applied to tracts of land, often several square miles in extent, dotted with hamlets and houses. The representative man in fact is the jotedar, or holder of a transferable tenure in a parcel of land on terms similar to those described under the same denomination for the district of Julpigoree. Next to the jotedar comes the chukanidar, with a class of rights and privileges similar in character to, though less in degree than those of his superior; and amongst both descriptions, where persons are well-to-do, the practice has prevailed of adopting some title, such as pradhan, bosnia, pramanik, or (rarely) mundul. In some talooks there may be found many persons bearing such titles, in others a single person or none. In former times, when the administration of justice was less efficient, the bearers of these titles exercised more power than they do now, but they still have some influence with the poorer classes of persons, are consulted before resort is had to the courts, and sometimes their influence suffices to settle petty disputes. The title of pradhan is generally hereditary.

(b) In some talooks putwarees are found. They write the accounts and make rough measurements of land when required to do so. They have no fixed remuneration, but get a few annas from persons employing them. The title of putwaree is hereditary, unless there is the disqualification of not being able to read and write; and the persons so styling themselves are found amongst all castes, Rajbunsees as well as Mussulmans. Putwarees do not collect rents for others. They do not keep shops; but when they have money, they lend it out occasionally like other persons.

(c) There are no remnants of the old police in this state; there are not even chowkidars to be found.

No. 290T, dated Hazareebaugh, the 10th November 1872.

From—C. BERNARD, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the General Department,

To—The Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2453, dated 21st September last, submitting a report on the indigenous agency employed in taking the census in the Cooch Behar division, and in reply to observe that the Lieutenant-Governor regrets to notice that the census was so imperfectly taken in some of the districts of your division.

2. With reference to clause D, paragraph 2, of your letter, I am desired to request that you will have the goodness to report very particularly, for the information of His Honor, why the Lepchas of the Darjeeling district have become scattered, and have to some extent left the district.

No. 3259, dated Julpigoree, the 14th December 1872.

Memo. by—BABOO DENONATH MOOKERJEE, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner.

COPY forwarded to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in reply to No. 290T, dated 10th November last.

No. 174C, dated Darjeeling, the 9th December 1872.

From—MAJOR D. W. MORTON, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling,

To—The Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division.

REFERRING to your memorandum No. 2963, dated 18th ultimo, forwarding extract from letter No. 2903, dated 10th idem, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to your address, I have the honor to state that the subject of the extract, the apparent diminution of pure Lepchas in this district, has engaged my attention for some years.

2. I have from time to time made inquiries in regard to the cause of the apparent diminution, and I am satisfied that this is to be found in—

(a) The difficulty of procuring virgin soil on this side of the Teesta.

(b) Intermarriage of Lepchas with Nimboos and Bhuteas.

3. (a) A Lepcha is so far a child of nature, as the expression goes, that he loves an unfettered life. He is laborious to a certain extent, but it must be in his own way. The trouble he takes in cleaning a forest for the sake of a three-years' crop, if properly applied, would make him a fair agriculturist.

As it is, without the word for a "plough" in his otherwise copious vocabulary, he rarely stays more than three years in the same place. At the expiration of this period he moves off in quest of soil which is either virgin or which has lain fallow for years. His services are not appreciated as a cooly on a tea garden; indeed, he is chary of offering himself for such employment. He will not even settle down for any

time on grounds in the holding of a mundul or headman of his own caste. For instance, on the large tract of country in the holding of Cheebo Llama, and under the management of Teadook mooktear, a Lepcha, they are but few Lepchas to be found. The same may be said of Saddyong Mongba, a tract above the Teesta bridge, on which Lepchas were invited to settle. The soil is splendid. The mundul is a Lepcha, and yet the ubiquitous Paharia is to be found there in larger numbers than the Lepcha.

4. I am informed that owing to forest lands being conserved, and large portions of the district being taken up for tea, many of the Lepchas have found Independent Sikkim more congenial to their habits than this district.

5. In the course of the tour in the hills, which I completed on the 27th of last month, I learnt on good authority that Lepchas were taking to cardamom cultivation. This is a most valuable cultivation (acre for acre far more valuable than tea), and if it is found to suit the Lepchas, some of those who have gone to Sikkim may be expected to return.

6. (b) A Lepcha is not so clannish as a Bhutea. He is "hail, fellow, well met" with every one he comes across. Bhuteas keep to themselves, and the men rarely intermarry with other castes. A Lepcha intermarries freely with Nembhors, and to a smaller extent with Bhuteas. As a consequence, in this district at least, the individuality of the Lepcha is being lost. Many a man calls himself a Lepcha in Darjeeling who is only a half-breed. Humanity gains, though the Lepchas may lose, by the custom of intermarriage to which I have referred. Allowing for exceptions, it may be said that whilst a pure Lepcha is, in common parlance, "a very good fellow," he is, like many others of his kind to be met with in this world, of very little use to society.

No. 4714, dated Calcutta, the 31st December 1872.

From—J. WARE EDGAR, Esq., Offg. Junior Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal,
To—The Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 3259, dated 14th December 1872, submitting copy of a letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, on the subject of the diminution of Lepchas in the district of Darjeeling.

2. In reply I am to say that the Deputy Commissioner has omitted to mention one cause, viz. the selling the lands cultivated by Lepchas over their heads as waste, and turning them out, as in case of the late sale to Mr. Graham of Tukvar.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor begs that, in future, great care may be taken that a fair quantity of the land is reserved for these original possessors of it.

DACCA DIVISION.

No. 504T, dated Sylhet, the 26th November 1872.

From—A. ABERCROMBIE, Esq., Offg. Commissioner of the Dacca Division,
To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

I HAVE the honor to reply to circular No. 22 of 16th July last—
General Statistics.

2. The Magistrates were exhorted to give special attention to the subject, but there is nothing to add to the information already sent up in original to the Registrar-General.

3. The old hereditary village putwaree, wherever there may have been any, as in part of Mymensing, has disappeared along with the village community, and any men who now bear the designation of putwaree, are nothing more than the servants of the zemindars, and so are the munduls.

4.* The pradhans or matbars are simply the most respected men in the village; they are well-to-do in life, and their personal character gains for them the position of a pradhan. They dispose of village squabbles, cases of caste, breaches of morality tending to give rise to scandal, and their decision is universally respected; but their authority rests solely on the village public feeling. They are in no degree hereditary office-bearers, nor do they owe their position to anything so much as personal character. It follows, therefore, that once gained, they keep the position for life.

5. The number of munduls will vary, there being two, even three, in a large village, and one among two or three small hamlets. Their chief use is to assist the zemindar's gomastah or tehsildar when he comes round for rent, and they are nominated and removable by the zemindars.

CHITTAGONG DIVISION.

No. 98, dated Chittagong, the 17th May 1872.

From—H. HANKEY, Esq., Officiating Commissioner of the Chittagong Division,

To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

WITH reference to your letter No. 1279, dated 13th ultimo, calling for a report showing clearly and fully the *modus operandi* of taking the late census, I have the honor to report as follows.

2. The *modus operandi* of taking the late census, and the nature of the agency employed, have already been described in my census reports to the Inspector-General of Registration.

3. In the district of Chittagong, the zemindars as a rule gave no material assistance; indeed, they were not expected to do so, their position in this district being generally that of petty landholders with little or no local influence. In the Cox's Bazar sub-division, however, they were utilized to a certain extent, sending their servants with the enumerators to point out houses, &c. One zemindar, Baboo Surrut Chunder Roy, supplied two persons who acted as deputy supervisors in the island of Mascoff; and Mr. Windram of Meelacherra (Ramoo tea estates) also furnished one such person. The village chowkidars were employed as runners to carry diaries, reports, and other papers from the interior to the police stations, whence they were forwarded to headquarters by the regular dāk.

4. The Magistrate of Chittagong further reports that the indigenous agency that was employed in taking the census, was that of the village headmen, or matabars as they are called, from which class the enumerators were generally selected. As at present informed, the Magistrate has reason to believe that the work of enumeration was satisfactorily done by these men, and that they have been generally willing to act.

5. These matabars, the Magistrate adds, are selected from among the most influential men in a village; they have the nomination of chowkidars, and exercise some degree of authority over their fellow-villagers. In all matters concerning the village, they are supposed to be the medium of communication with the Government officers. They form, in sort, a kind of committee for the administration of local affairs. It does not appear that their office is strictly hereditary, though on the death of a matabar his son or brother would probably have the preference before other candidates, if considered competent by his fellow-villagers. The matabar system is said to be specially recognized by the Mughls in the south of the district, who go to them as referees in petty disputes, &c.

6. "The institution is," the Magistrate remarks, "certainly worth preserving, and may in time become valuable for purposes of

local administration. It is of course not to be supposed that these matabars are always to be trusted, or that they always prefer public justice to the attainment of their private ends. Still, as a body, they are useful; the more so that their authority is derived from and recognized by the people themselves. In the nomination of punchayets under the Chowkidaree Acts, the matabars, where found qualified to act, have generally been selected for appointment."

7. The Magistrate of Tipperah reports that village communities, in the sense in which the words may be applied in other parts of India, do not now exist in Tipperah. The only official persons through whom information could be obtained were the agents of the rent receivers and the village chowkidars. These last rendered assistance in pointing out houses which might have escaped notice, in conveying letters and instruction between the supervisors and the enumerators, and to and from the thannahs; but they did not all work or work cordially. The Magistrate thinks that if the Chowkidaree Act had been in force in the district of Tipperah, the chowkidars and the punchayets would have been in themselves able to perform almost all the duties of the actual enumeration.

8. In places where the zemindar's amlah or agents were found, they were employed in Tipperah either as enumerators or as supervisors of small tracts of country assigned to them.

9. Paid enumerators were employed in Tipperah to take the census of persons employed or living in boats, as their duties required constant and protracted attention. There were thirty employed in the sub-division of Bramanbariah, and twelve in the rest of the district.

10. In the district of Noacolly there were 7 supervisors, 48 assistant supervisors, and 533 enumerators, employed. The supervisors were men of the amlah class—two Mahomedans and five Hindus. Out of the 48 assistant supervisors, 24 were talookdars, and 24 candidates appointed from the Magistrates, Deputy Magistrates, and zemindars' offices, where they had been engaged as apprentices. Of the 533 enumerators, 1 was a zemindar, 83 howladars, 114 talookdars, 75 howladars and talookdars, 1 chowkidar, 94 putwarees, 10 teshildars or zemindars' agents, 61 village headmen, 62 agriculturists, 22 village gurus (masters), 1 native kabiraj, 5 schoolmasters, and 4 office apprentices.

11. The Magistrate reports that the most influential men, and those permanently acquainted with the inhabitants of the villages in the several pergunnahs, were selected to perform the duties of assistant supervisors and enumerators, and that the zemindars' agents were mostly respectable and educated men, to whom the object of the census was explained, and who in turn took every opportunity to circulate throughout their estates the reasons for which enumerators were to visit their villages, and the manner in which the enumeration was to be conducted.

12. The Magistrate further adds that in pergunnahs where any reluctance or misconception was thought likely on the part of the villagers, the zemindars appointed the chief men of those villages to accompany the enumerators, and rendered every assistance in their power to facilitate the work and ensure its completion. In the

pergunnah of Siddhi (of which Mr. Courjon is zemindar), Mr. Wood, the agent, rendered very useful assistance in appointing his own zemindaree men to perform the work of enumerators. Similar assistance was rendered by the local agents of the Bhullooh estates for completing the enumeration of Hatiah.

13. In the Hill Tracts of Chittagong the hill chiefs took the census, each of his own class or dependants. By far the greater number of hillmen owe allegiance to one or other of these men, and such a mode of taking the census would seem to them natural and easy. The chiefs have dewans or minor chiefs under them, and many karbaries or agents, and through these men they have probably taken the census. The rest of the population, *i.e.*, the dwellers in the khas mehal, &c., were enumerated by persons deputed by the Deputy Commissioner. Between the people and the Deputy Commissioner these are the chiefs—the Bohmong, the Mong Rajah, and the Kalindee Ranees; and under these are the dewans or sub-chiefs, and the roajahs or headmen of villages. The roajah acts as an arbitrator among the villagers, and is also frequently chosen with the consent of the disputants as an arbiter in cases in which some hill custom is the matter in issue and the question is not very important. The dewans and chiefs are employed in the same way in more important cases.

14. On the whole, though it is satisfactory to find that some sort of agency does exist in this division, I do not think that there is any reason to plume ourselves on either its extent or power. I have for years expressed my convictions that the administrative local agency available to the district officer in Bengal is nil. This fact is now fully recognised by the present Government, and several measures have been inaugurated to supply the deficiency. My opinions having been so fully endorsed by the Government, I need not reiterate them, and will only remark that the census proceedings leave my opinions unchanged.

15. What we want to find is an administrative power and capacity of Government for getting at facts at a greater degree than are supposed to exist. As a test of the existence or extent of this power, I would deprecate too much reliance being placed on experiences derived from the census. What we require is a *general* power, and not merely facilities or an agency for finding out any special or particular facts. The census did little more than develop or acquaint us with the letter. Unfortunately we need one piece of knowledge, without which experiences as derived from the census, *quoad* the existence of local agency, are deprived of nearly all their value. Was the agency we found or created honest, or was it profitable to the agents?

16. *Chittagong and Noacolly*.—In two districts of this division the post of enumerator was much sought after. From Noacolly some appeals were presented against the orders of the officer in charge of the census operations in not appointing them enumerators. Either then these appellants were influenced by disinterested or by interested motives; if the latter, then their anxiety to serve the State, or the existence of this particular agency, has no value as a criterion or test.

17. I trust the above has sufficiently explained my meaning. I merely wish to insist on caution being necessary before accepting the experiences of the census as a certain and undeniable proof of the

existence of a great and undeveloped local agency. I do not by any means assert that the result of the census has taught nothing. On the contrary, it is clear that Chittagong is decidedly ahead of the other two districts in this matter. We find the matabar system prevailing here with great vigour, and I fully concur in the Magistrate's remarks on this subject. These institutions are most useful, and are of great help to the Magistrate in introducing the Chowkidaree Act, inasmuch as the one is but a germ of the other. Where these or similar institutions exist, the Chowkidaree Act creates nothing, but merely improves and gives force to what it finds. I believe no race is so thoroughly conservative as the Bengali, and I therefore think that legislation which has the aforesaid tendency, must be very much more acceptable to the masses than that which introduces new and foreign ideas.

18. If I have dwelt at unnecessary length on this subject, I must beg His Honor's indulgence; but it will be seen that more than one Magistrate has introduced the subject of the Chowkidaree Act as bearing upon the matter under discussion, and I cannot resist the opportunity of according my conviction that legislation, to be successful, must to a greater or lesser degree carry the people along with it.

19. I fully concur in the opinion of the Magistrate of Tipperah, that if the Chowkidaree Act had been in force in the district, the chowkidars and the punchayets would have been in themselves able to perform almost all the duties of the actual enumerators.

20. There are no putwarees in the division, but the chowkidars have apparently proved themselves a most useful body. Their status and usefulness will be considerably improved under the Chowkidaree Act. The zemindars' agents appear to have been of considerable service; but as a class, speaking especially of the lowest class, such as gomastahs, &c., I mistrust them, and should like to be independent of them.

21. I have stated that the Chittagong district appears to possess the best indigenous institutions. This fact seems to have had a great effect upon the expenditure. The cost of taking the census in the several districts was as follows:—

				Rs.	A.	P.
Chittagong	...	...	...	1,088	10	3
Tipperah	...	...	...	2,182	15	4
Noacolly	...	...	...	4,160	0	0

No. 201, dated Chittagong, the 6th August 1872.

From—H. HANKEY, Esq., Offg. Commissioner of the Chittagong Division,

To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

In reply to your letter No. 2047, dated 25th June last, I have the honor to furnish the following particulars regarding the putwarees of Tipperah and Noacolly, and the matabors of Chittagong.

2. The statement in paragraph 20 of my report on the *modus operandi* of taking the census, viz. that there are no putwarees in the districts of my division, appears to be correct from the information

which I have yet been able to gather on the subject of the putwaree system in the Chittagong division. By the term "putwaree" in paragraph 10 of my report above referred to, the zemindars' servants were meant. These are petty rent collectors employed by landholders, and have no official connection with the Collector; and the term "putwaree" as applied to these servants of zemindars is, I think, a misnomer generally adopted, and was imported into my report from the Collector's letter.

3. In paragraph 109 of the Board's printed report (on the revenue administration) for the year 1870-71, the districts of Bulloeah and Tipperah are especially referred to as the districts in which attempts had been made to put in force Sections 12-15 of Regulation IX of 1833, and the Magistrates of this division have tried to ascertain when the putwaree system disappeared in their respective districts, and arrived at the following conclusions.

4. The communication with the Collector of Chittagong is still going on, and his final report has not yet been received. I have referred him to some old records which were found amongst the old records of my office, and which may be useful to the Collector in collecting further information on the subject.

5. The district officer of Noacolly (Bulloeah) reports that the "connection of the putwarees with the Collector appears from the office records to have ceased on the abolition of the canoongoes in 1828. The mouzawaree papers under Regulations III of 1798 and VIII of 1799 were filed from 1835 to 1837 by the zemindars or talookdars, but they are not signed by putwarees in former year; these papers bore the signature both of the canoongoes and of the putwarees, and since 1837 no zemindaree papers have been filed."

6. The Collector is inclined to attribute the discontinuance of the putwaree system to a remark of the Commissioner made in 1837, and communicated to the then Collector of Bulloeah. This remark was conveyed in the following terms:—"It is the present opinion of the Board that the penalties in the regulation above quoted* should not be enforced until rules are furnished under provisions of Section 13." The Collector (Mr. King) hence concludes that the filing of zemindaree papers was evidently intentionally allowed afterwards to fall into disuse.

7. The Collector further remarks: "The putwarees were from the first paid by the zemindars and talookdars; and in the accounts formerly filed by the canoongoes, a column is found headed 'putwarees' pay.' There are still putwarees in the district, but they have no official connection with the Collector; they are petty rent collectors employed by landholders, and it was to them that reference was made in my census report." I understand the Collector to mean that these putwarees are, as remarked above, petty gomastahs, or servants of zemindars, and have not the remotest connection with Government officials.

8. The papers formerly prepared by putwarees in the district of Noacolly appear to have been filed by canoongoes up to 1233 B.S. (1826-27), and it is evident from the cash accounts that these officers received pay up to 31st July 1828, when they are entered as *masool*, or abolished. But an express order dispensing with them cannot be

traced. There are now no canoongoes in the district, nor is there any trace of the system of which they formed a part.

9. The Magistrate of Tipperah reports: "I have tried to ascertain when and how the putwarees disappeared in 1837, the latest date given by the Board; but no traces remain; and looking to the whole history of the system, it is probable that the compliance with the law was a mere form, and not a fact. The word "putwaree" has now an ominous signification for the ryot, as the putwaree *khurueh*, or collection expense, is one of the illegal cesses most generally levied here. I mention this fact, as I think it may hint how the putwaree proper gradually died out. It is easy to understand how he became more and more under the immediate authority of the zemindar, sinking at last into a mere tehsildar, while retaining his original title, to meet the requirements of Regulation XII of 1817. In some cases the name seems to have been transmitted hereditarily, but as a distinctive title and without reference to the employment of the person bearing it.

10. "The canoongoes in this district (Tipperah) were, as already reported by the Board, abolished in 1828. There were 17 employed in Tipperah of four grades, viz. two on Rs. 30, four on Rs. 25, five on Rs. 20, and six on Rs. 15. No *tahoot milani* papers have been filed since 1836."

11. Regarding the matabors of Chittagong, I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of the Magistrate's letter, No. 1436, dated 1st instant, which answers all the questions put in your letter under reference.

No. 1436, dated Chittagong, the 1st August 1872.

From—A. L. CLAY, Esq., Offg. Magistrate of Chittagong,

To—The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

WITH reference to your No. 168, dated 8th ultimo, I have the honor to report:

2. *Are the matabors always or generally small landholders?* Generally, but their position does not seem to depend upon their property, the office of matabor being usually considered hereditary.

3. *Are they universal throughout the district, and are they in every village?* The institution is universal throughout the district; and every village has its one, two, or three matabors, according to its size. In large villages there is a matabor to every *para*, or hamlet.

4. *Are they Mahomedans and Hindus indifferently; and does a matabor's authority extend only to his co-religionists?* They are Mahomedans and Hindus indifferently, and followers of both creeds are equally subject to their authority.

5. *Do the people submit petty cases to them?* Matabors are frequently consulted, especially in disputes about *somaj* (religious party or clique. Members of one *somaj* do not eat with members of another) and such matters. By their authority, if so disposed, they may prevent quarrels from becoming serious; and on the occurrence of *foujdaree*

cases they are often consulted. Intricate questions, as disputes about land, division of property on a person's death, &c., are generally submitted to a *salis*, or jury of influential men, of which the matabor may be, but is not, *ex officio* a member.

6. I may add that the chowkidars are, as a rule, creatures of the matabors, with whom they act in concert. In cannot be said that the matabors' influence over these rural policemen is always exerted on the side of law and order.

7. In the south of the district there appear to be a few Mugh matabars; their position is probably the same as that of their Mahomedan and Hindu colleagues. The town of Cox's Bazaar is divided into twelve *mohullas*, or wards, each of which is under a mohulladar. All or nearly all of these mohulladars are Mughls.

Extract from a letter from J. W. EDGAR, Esq., Officiating Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Commissioner of the Orissa Division,—
(No. 2974, dated Calcutta, the 21st August 1872).

* * * * *

3. The Lieutenant-Governor's attention has been drawn to the mention of *sauntees*, or watchmen, which occurs in the 7th paragraph of the Collector's letter; they seem to be a new kind of indigenous agency, and His Honor would be glad to have more particular information about them.

No. 104, dated Cuttack, the 23rd November 1872,

From—T. E. RAVENSHAW, Esq., Commissioner of the Orissa Division,

To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Dept.

IN reply to your No. 2974 of 21st August 1872, paragraph 3, I have the honor to state that the Merichpore sauntees are four hereditary office-bearers and jagheer-holders in the estate, whose duty, as their name indicates, is to gather together scattered portion of wrecks and wrecked property and protect it from plunder; they are a sort of hereditary bailiffs, whose special duty is to look after Jetsam and Flatsam. In former centuries some parts of Orissa coast used to have a bad reputation for misconduct in case of wrecks, and the old native governments seem to have created the appointment of sauntee to deal with such cases.

2. Merichpore is one of the old peshkush or tributary estates, and has never been settled in detail. These sauntees hold 32 beegahs of land, or about 8 beegahs each, as service tenure, and in consideration of this they still continue to make weekly reports to the nearest police station. There are no others of the same class in Pooree.

3. I was at first disposed to consider these men as probably belonging to the sauntee or soout tribe, found in many of the tributary states (*vide* Dalton, page 223), but I have now ascertained that the name borne by these Merichpore sauntees is their official designation as gatherers or collectors of wrecked property.

PATNA DIVISION.

No. 403R, dated Bankipore, the 20th January 1873.

From—S. C. BAYLEY, Esq., Officiating Commissioner of Patna,

To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the General Department.

In reply to Government circular No. 22 of the 16th July 1872, I have the honor to report on the indigenous agency that exists in the districts of this division under the special heads given.

2. *Village Headmen.*—In all the districts of this division there is, besides the putwarees, another class of village headmen, known as mahta or jeth-ryots. The former title is used when the headman belongs to the Koormee or the Koiree caste, and the latter when he is a Brahman or Rajpoot.

3. The following account of the origin of the institution given by Mr. Drummond is as full as I could make it, and he has referred to all the authorities I could have gone to in the matter:—

“The village headmen in this district (Sarun) are called jeth-ryots, and are, as the name denotes (jeth-ryots signifying eldest or principal ryots), generally ryots of some substance and position in the village. The jeth-ryot acts as an intermediate agent between the zemindar and the other ryots in all village affairs. There is generally one in each village, and his influence within his sphere is believed to be still considerable. They are undoubtedly representatives of an ancient institution. The most probable explanation of the origin of an institution which under one designation or another is so general throughout the country, is to be found in that given in the fifth report from the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, where the head cultivator of the village is stated to have been either supposed instrumental in originally settling the village, or to have derived his right by inheritance or purchase from that transaction (fifth report, page 18). The jeth-ryot holds continuously, and his office is generally hereditary; but if there be no one in the family fitted to hold the rank, or if the family has become reduced in circumstances and practically no longer retains the position of principal cultivator, another man is appointed.

“In such cases the inclination of the tenantry is never consulted. A jeth-ryot is sometimes presented by the zemindar with ‘pugree’ in public, as a mark of distinction, on the day of his assuming office, and on every subsequent Dashahara festival, but he has to pay in return salamee to the zemindar.

“From a notice which I find in paragraphs 243 and 244 of Mr. Shore’s minute of June 1789, respecting permanent settlement of lands in Bengal, it appears that the institution of village headmen had even

then to a considerable extent lapsed from its original utility. The passage referred to runs thus : ' This class of men, so apparently useful, seem greatly to have contributed to the growth of the various abuses now existing, and to have secured their own advantages, both at the expense of the zemindar, landlord, rentee, and inferior ryots. Their power and influence over the inferior ryots is great and extensive; they compromise with the farmer at their expense, and procure their own rents, to be lowered without any diminution in what he is to receive, by throwing the difference upon the lower ryots, from whom it is exacted by taxes of various denominations. They make a traffic in pottahs, lowering the rates of them for private stipulations, and connive at the separation and seclusion of lands. If any attempt is made to check the abuses, they urge the ryots to complain and sometimes to resist.' In the subsequent paragraph of the minute, however, an observation of a committee of inquiry appointed in 1777 to the following effect is quoted :—' The mundul is therefore chosen from amongst the eldest and most intelligent inhabitants, and his influence and services depend solely on the good opinion of the ryots; it is not the interest of the zemindar to change him as long as he preserves their confidence.' And in admitting the justice of this principle, and in considering then from what cause an institution of such apparent utility had fallen into abuse, Mr. Shore proceeds to observe—' The reply is obvious: the ignorance and incapacity of zemindars and farmers on one side, and the inattention of Government on the other, to the preservation of the ancient forms of restraint, the restraint alluded to being the check supplied by the well-established custom of the country under which the accounts of the rent of every portion of land and other sources of revenue were open to the inspection of the officers of Government.'

"It may well be that at the present day, in the absence of proper checks, the jeth-ryot is more ready to abuse than to exercise for good the trust reposed in him by the body of the cultivating community, whose agent originally at least he was especially supposed to be. And there is, I understand, reason to believe that in many cases the jeth-ryots have now practically become merely the gomastah of the zemindar, owing to the frequency of their employment by landholders in that capacity. It is believed that under the influence of this custom it sometimes happens that there is a separate jeth-ryot for each divided 'puttee' of a village. But in the foregoing notice of the abuse of the functions of this office, Mr. Shore's remarks seem from the context to have applied rather to the districts of Bengal Proper than to Behar; and in Dr. Buchanan's statistical survey of the districts of Behar and Patna, evidence is afforded, if such be needed, that in the Behar province at least the institution had not, even at a subsequent period, lost its original utility, as may be gathered from the following extract from Dr. Buchanan's report :—' The chief of each village, who is here usually called mahta or jeth-ryot, holds his office by hereditary tenure, and does not league with the owners of the land to oppress the tenants, but in general supports their interests, and being a wealthy man, of some education, assists the poor and illiterate in settling their accounts. In all well-regulated Indian governments this is the proper duty of such persons, and it appears to me that in Bengal these

persons might be rendered highly useful by making them entirely independent of the zemindar, and removable by Government on an application from the majority of the tenants under their protection, whose wishes with regard to succession should in all cases be supported. At the same time, these chiefs of villages should be secured in all the emoluments which they have hitherto received, and for which most ample deductions were made to the zemindars at the settlement. On some estates the mahta is a kind of security for all the tenants; and when one of these goes away, it is he that appoints a new one, the owner of the land giving himself no trouble about the matter' (*vide* Montgomery Martin's 'Eastern India,' Vol. I, page 316).

"Dr. Buchanan's opinion as to the value of this institution under proper regulation is so pertinent to the objects of the present inquiry, and his remarks are also so much in accord with the Lieutenant-Governor's views as regards the advantages of settling for the revenue with this class of village officials, that I make no apology for quoting the following further extract from Dr. Buchanan's report, with reference to the statistical survey of the district of Goruckpore:— 'I am thoroughly persuaded that one of the most practical means of securing the tenants and other inhabitants from oppression is to re-establish in each mouzah the office of hereditary chief. This person should be considered, as he was under every well-regulated native government, as the agent and protector of the other inhabitants, who, from ignorance or timidity, are seldom able to protect themselves. Although, therefore, the office should be hereditary in order to render it respectable, yet in all cases the representations of the people should be carefully consulted, and whatever person the majority of them chooses from the hereditary family should enjoy the office: should even the people have no confidence in any individual family, on a representation of the majority some stranger should be appointed to hold the office until a person of the family arose who engaged the good opinion of his neighbours. All payments to landlords, whether of free or assessed lands, should be made through these (hereditary) chiefs, who, on a reasonable commission, are usually willing to account for the whole rent, and with such management all the tenants of a mouzah are usually willing to be mutual security for each other. By this means the most oppressive system of collecting rents by law, ignorant messengers (mohasil payada), might be altogether avoided, nor could any doubt arise whether or not the rents had been actually paid. In this district, at every renewal of the settlement, there can be no doubt of the indisputable right of Government to restore the village establishment to this footing. Even in Bengal, where a perpetual settlement exists, I have no doubt of the right of Government to interfere; for such an office, I think, was actually established in every mouzah when the settlement was made, and most ample allowance was deducted for his charge. If, therefore, from the negligence of the officers employed, the landlords have been permitted to render these chiefs of mouzahs their mere creatures, and the tools of their illegal exactions, instead of the protectors of the poor and ignorant, I cannot think that such an abuse ought to be allowed to continue in perpetuity'" (*vide* Montgomery Martin's "Eastern India," Vol. II, page 540).

4. Other particulars concerning these village headmen are given in the following extract from the report of the Collector of Gya :—

"Besides the putwarees, there exist, in this district, headmen known by the name of mohtoara or jeth-ryots. These men are undoubtedly the remnants of an ancient institution. Every village has its mohtoa, and in large villages there are two or three, to each one of whom a distinct portion of the village is assigned. Whenever a new proprietor or farmer enters into possession of a village, one of his first acts is to call before him the mohtoara, and through him he distributes sweetmeats to the ryots. On the mohtoara he confers a *khalant* in the shape of a pugree and sheet, after receiving which the mohtoa presents his nuzzur of a rupee, which being done, the proprietor or farmer is declared to have entered into possession.

"These headmen become middlemen, or go-between between the zemindars and ryots. Should the proprietor or farmer desire to introduce anything new in the village, he ordinarily first consults the mohtoara, who, as a representative of the ryots in the zemindar's cutcherry, urges his objection or assents to the measure, and his views are considered as the views of the entire village.

"Again, whenever the zemindar or his representative proceeds to measure the fields or estimate the crops, it is the duty of the headman to accompany him, and act, if necessary, as a middleman between him and the ryots. For example, if the zemindar's party estimates the produce of a beegah of land at 20 maunds, and the ryot estimates it at only 10 maunds, the headman intervenes, and his decision is as a rule looked upon as final.

"The post of a headman is an honorary one, but a *douceur* of from Rs. 5 to 10 is paid to him annually by the zemindar. Besides this, in addition to his social position, he enjoys certain other substantial advantages in getting land a trifle under the ordinary rent paid for such land by others.

"The village headman is not elected by the village community, but is nominated by the zemindar. The nomination depends upon the ability, circumstances, honesty, and respectability of the person to be selected. In many cases the office is an hereditary one, but it is not necessarily so; and if the son of a deceased mohtoa is wanting in ability, or be a man with no influence or authority in the village, he is not allowed to succeed his father. In addition to the functions heretofore mentioned, the mohtoa frequently keeps in his custody the collections of the village, with an account of the receipts and disbursements similar to what is kept by the putwaree.

"Should the headman give dissatisfaction to the ryots, they petition the zemindar to change him. Should the zemindar be dissatisfied with the headman, he dismisses him. On a petition from the ryots, an inquiry is held by the zemindar, who passes his order according to the result of his inquiry.

"The mohtoa holds a high social position in the village community, and is, or used to be, looked on as the exponent of the opinion and views of the village.

"There is reason, however, to think that the position occupied by these men in the present day is less important, and that the office

carries less weight than used to be the case. This is to some extent attributable to the fact that in the present day matters are much more frequently brought before the courts to be decided which formerly would be decided, and with similar equity, in the village."

5. Mr. Alexander confirms these statements briefly in regard to Shahabad, but he seems to think that their influence has very seriously deteriorated, and that they are now almost entirely subservient to the zemindar. He goes on to say that among the hill tribes inhabiting the plateau of the Kymoor range in the south of the Shahabad district there is a class of village headmen known as *baigas*. "These men appear to exercise considerable influence both over landlord and tenant, and are regarded with much superstitious awe. It is reported the ryots will not cultivate their fields unless the *baiga* first ploughs his, nor will they sow their seed unless the example has been similarly set them by the *baiga*. They will not cut and gather their crops until the said headman has taken his share, that is, a large portion of grain from each field. If, owing to a quarrel with a proprietor, the *baiga* leaves the village, the tenants all follow, and no new village can be established without the presence of a *baiga*."

6. A description of these *baigas* is given in Mr. Eyre's diary, forwarded to Government with my letter No. 358, dated 7th October 1872, and subsequent correspondence, from which it is clear that they retain a remnant of priestly functions. Their influence, as I have learnt in my recent tour in the hills, is not less than is here stated, and they are an essential agency in the management of these hill villages.

7. Another description of headmen is to be found in Shahabad, known by the name of *mokuddum* or *gowan*. They are met with in many, or, as the Collector thinks, in all villages. They are thus described by Mr. Alexander: "The term '*mokuddum*' is originally applied to the first settler or squatter in a village, but the position and title being hereditary, it has extended itself gradually to all his descendants, so that in most villages many *mokuddums* are found. They do not appear to have any large amount of influence, but are consulted in matters appertaining to the village and its lands, and enjoy certain privileges, such as the leasing of fisheries and other sayers with advantage to themselves; and at the time of the towjee, receive presents in the way of sweetmeats, &c., from the zemindars. They cannot be removed or dismissed by the zemindar. They cannot be removed or dismissed by the zemindar. They appear to be the remains of an ancient institution. They formerly collected rents, sent in unclaimed property, receiving 5 per cent. on their collections as wages for services. These powers and duties of theirs have long ago died out, and in fact now they are only similar in position and influence to the *jeth-ryot* in a village. The agency of these men was not at all employed in taking the census."

8. The Collector of Patna also gives some information in regard to head-ryots. He says: "In every village one of the leading ryots is recognised by the zemindar as the *mohtoara*; as a rule he gets no pay, but only a remission of a few annas in the rate of rent per *beegah*. In some *mouzahs*, however, an annual allowance of from Rs. 5 to 20 is paid to him by zemindars.

"The chief duties of a mohtoara are to act as a go-between between the zemindars and the ryots in the assessment of lands and other similar matters ; to preserve a good feeling between the zemindar and the other ryots of the village, and to help the putwarees and other local representatives of the zemindars in all zemindaree matters.

"Mohtoaras may be of any caste, but are generally Kairies or Koormies ; where they are Bahbuns or of any other high caste, they are not called by the name of mohtoara, but by that of jeth-ryot.

"They are nominated not by the ryots but by the zemindars, in consideration of the extent of their cultivation and the influence they possess over the other ryots of the village.

"They are generally hereditary, but each succeeding mohtoara must be duly nominated and approved of by the zemindar before he can be recognised as such by the villagers. They can however be remanded or changed at the pleasure of the zemindar.

"No change appears to have taken place in the status, authority, or functions of the mohtoaras for several generations.

"The agency of mohtoaras cannot, however, be made so much use of in procuring statistics for the following reasons :—

"*First.*—We have no laws by which we can command their services as we can do those of the putwarees under Regulation XII of 1871.

"*Secondly.*—It is difficult to get at their names, we having no means at our disposal by which we can do so readily and correctly.

"*Thirdly.*—As they are all cultivators, they are averse to leaving their homes and neglecting their cultivation ; and as attendance at courts forms no part of their duty, they would do their best to evade the Collector's orders.

"*Fourthly.*—There are no mohtoaras in villages consisting of araz or cultivable lands only and having no bastes. No information about such mouzahs can therefore be obtained through mohtoaras."

9. The Collectors of Tirhoot and Chumparun also confirm the existence of the jeth-ryot as a recognised institution in each village, but add nothing to the above information, which is applicable in its main outlines to the whole division.

Village Councils—Punchayets.—There are no established village councils in this division invested with any general authority, but punchayets or assemblies of caste men are convened whenever occasion arises. In these assemblies questions chiefly of a religious and social nature are discussed, and decided by a majority of votes.

10. Mr. Drummond, quoting from Dr. Buchanan, gives the following information regarding caste punchayets as still applicable to his district :—

"The purity of caste among the high tribes is prescribed by assemblies in which all the members are equal. Among the lower tribes there are chiefs called sirdars, choudhuris, mehtas, or maugjans. The office is usually hereditary, but on complaint from his dependents they are changed by any person in power, such as the zemindar, tehsildar, or darogah, who procures an order from the Magistrate, who, if he chooses, confirms the change. The people under each chief are called in *chataye*—as all sitting on the same mat—an honor which they forfeit by acting contrary to the rules of caste ; but the authority of these

chiefs is not confined to matters of caste alone. No man will enter into any engagement to perform work without the order of his chief, who thus makes a monopoly in the true spirit of corporation. The chief cannot excommunicate without the consent of the principal persons of his 'chataye,' and has the chief share in the feasts which are given at purifications. Under the chief is a person called the 'barik,' who receives the fines for transgressions, and with them purchases the feast. On dividing this, if there are any remains, he takes them to himself. Some of the 'bunias' and all the inferior castes have chiefs.

The punchayet chiefs are here generally called mahajuns or pradhans; the former being the title of the headmen among the Chamars, Doshad, and Dhoobis; and the latter the appellation of the chief among the Koormees, Kahars, Kandoos, Kalwars, &c. Though it was formerly the practice, on complaint of the caste members and on report of a local authority, for the Magistrate to confirm changes in the office of chief of a punchayet, the practice has long fallen into disuse, and reports or petitions on such subjects are now never received by the Magistrate. Amongst the lower castes these punchayets decide all manner of disputes with impartiality, and recourse to their arbitration is very general. The verdict is given according to the opinion of the majority, and the threat of excommunication readily ensures the realization of the fines imposed for the offences of which cognizance is taken by the tribunal. These tribunals prevail both among the lower orders of Hindus and Mahomedans. Reference to punchayets among the higher classes is not so common now-a-days, principally, it is believed, because among these but little reliance is placed on the impartiality of such arbitration.

Dr. Buchanan threw out the suggestion that, the village headmen might be permitted, with the assistance of a punchayet, to decide petty differences arising among the people of their own mouzah, it being clearly understood that the officers of Government should in no manner interfere except to enforce the decisions of such punchayets.

"The suggestion is, I think, one well worthy of consideration; and if the decisions of such general punchayets were confined to matters not susceptible of disposal by the ordinary caste punchayets, a plan of village administration of justice in minor matters might yet be elaborated with some prospect of success. That some such system, if once organized, would be alike more healthy and more congenial to native feeling than the present system of resort to our law courts on all occasions, does not, I imagine, admit of doubt."

12. The Collector of Shahabad has furnished an extract from a report submitted by the sub-divisional officer of Bhabooah regarding the existence of trades of village convicts in a few villages of the sub-division: these are known under the denomination of "choarces" or "pathurs." "There is," the sub-divisional officer writes, "one pathur still in existence in mouzah Mokree, and questions of irrigation, caste, and public hospitality are decided by a meeting held there generally at ordinary fixed periods, or when occasion calls for a special meeting. The council-house is erected in a form of square stone benches fixed on stone stands large enough to contain 100 persons; it is supported by a fund from the produce of a *chousajha* (commonwealth), and kept

separate for the exclusive purpose of public hospitality and the performance of funeral rites of indigent persons. In other villages, such as Amoon Chand, &c., there are still remnants of pathurs, but the institution, I regret to say, is not in existence. Amongst the poorer classes, and in villages distant from our ordinary courts of justice, all questions concerning marriage and caste are decided by punchayets headed by their choudhuris."

13. The Collector of Sarun has alluded to a practice formerly in vogue, under which the Magistrate on complaint of caste men confirmed changes in the office of a chief of punchayet. This practice has long died out.

14. *Putwarees*.—The position and duties of the putwarees are much the same in all the districts of this division. Usually there is one putwaree in one village, but sometimes there are as many more, each shareholder having one putwaree for his share of the village. The putwaree is the village accountant. It is his duty to keep the biggits, the khusra of measurements, and all the various village accounts. He grants receipts for rents collected by the gomastahs. As a general rule, the putwaree does not collect the rents, but does so occasionally, especially in villages where there are no gomastahs, and the putwaree is considered sufficiently trustworthy. Putwarees are generally of the Kaiet caste; but sometimes a Koormi or even a Mahomedan putwaree is to be met with. Their office is not absolutely hereditary, but in practice it has generally become so; the zemindar finding it convenient to put in the place of a deceased putwaree his son or some close relation who has undergone a course of apprenticeship under his predecessor, and has thus acquired a knowledge of the estate and its tenants. In the case of dismissal on insufficient grounds the putwaree seeks redress at the hands of the Collector under Regulation XII of 1817.

15. The Collector of Tirhoot has submitted the following report on the subject :—

"As regards putwarees in Tirhoot, these persons have not the position that apparently their brethren in the North-West and Upper Provinces hold; generally the post descends from father to son, but not of necessity. They are usually paid at the rate of Rs. 3 to 4 per month, and they also receive as perquisites half an anna in every rupee of rent collections in cash. When the rent is paid in kind, they receive from half a seer to one seer in every maund. Their duties are, to keep village accounts, grant receipts, and also occasionally to collect rents. It is seldom that their education goes beyond a simple knowledge of Hindi. Putwarees here are almost invariably Hindus of the Kaiet caste. In some Koormi villages putwarees of that caste are found occasionally. One comes across a Mahomedan putwaree but very seldom.

"When a putwaree manages to realize funds, he invariably enters into money-lending transactions with the poorer ryots of his village, but they do not keep shops.

"Several putwarees will be found in one village. If there are a number of shareholders as proprietors, each shareholder keeps his own accountant, who is immediately dubbed putwaree. The putwarees have

existed in this district from time immemorial, there being nothing to prevent our supposing that they existed even before the Mahomedan Government. As a rule, each village has its own putwaree, but where the villages are small, one putwaree sometimes has charge of several of them; and on the other hand, when a village is owned by more than one proprietor, it sometimes happens that each proprietor has a putwaree to himself to look after the interests of his share. Small villages owned by petty landholders are an exception to the above rule, and have generally no putwaree, the putwaree's work being performed by the landholders themselves.

"With but few exceptions the putwarees are of the Kaiet caste, and receive a monthly pay from Rs. 1 to 3 each, besides a *hajjutana*, or fees of one to two pice in the rupee from the tenants on the rent paid. Those zemindars, however, who take the *hajjutana* or fees themselves, and include the same in the rent payable by ryots, pay the putwarees a consolidated salary of from Rs. 5 to 12 each per mensem. The legitimate duties of the putwarees are to keep accounts of rents, to write luggits and jumabundees, and grant receipts for rents collected by the gomastahs; but in some villages where there are no gomastahs, and the putwarees are considered sufficiently trustworthy, they collect rent also."

16. Mr. Alexander, the Collector of Shahabad, says: "In this district the putwarees were extensively and almost exclusively used in taking the census, as I have before reported. The putwaree registers are carefully kept up, and corrected from time to time as required. I look upon these men as a class who, if judiciously worked, may give much valuable aid in furnishing information on various statistical points. I have instructed the special Deputy Collector who has been appointed to collect agricultural statistics in this district to make considerable use of their services. The putwaree or village accountant is appointed by the zemindar, and his nomination, if confirmed by the Collector, is duly registered in the Collectorate. The office is generally considered hereditary; custom rules the succession; the zemindar can dismiss him; the same procedure being followed to confirm his removal from, as his appointment to, the post. The putwarees are almost invariably chosen from one caste—Kaiets. Their remuneration, known as *nig putwaree*, is either paid in kind or in cash; if the former, the general custom is one kutoha seer in every kutoha maund; if the latter, from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 anna on the jumabundee. The putwaree keeps the village accounts, and, where no tehsildar is entertained, collects the rents. They frequently hold land, seldom if ever keep shops, and rarely lend money on their own account in the way of a regular business."

17. The Collector of Sarun reports as follows:—

"Putwarees are generally entertained in this district, but the register of recorded putwarees has not been properly kept up, and it is impossible to ascertain therefore who is the present recognised putwaree of each village. In practice, in many villages there are more than one putwaree, and judging from the small number of putwarees' cases instituted, the zemindars would seem to appoint and dismiss them at pleasure without reference to this office. In fact, though nominally public servants, they are really the private servants of

zemindars. Under Section 16 of Regulation XII of 1817 the putwarees were required to file half-yearly papers in the canoongoe's office, and afterwards, under Sections 12 to 15 of Regulation IX of 1833, in the Collector's office, and this provision was duly carried out till at last the practice was discontinued (and has never since revived). On receipt of Commissioner's letter No. 1569, dated 12th April 1850, forwarding copy of Board's letter No. 85, dated 8th May 1849, intimating that the Board of Revenue had moved Government to cancel Sections 16 of Regulation XII of 1817 and 12 to 15 of Regulation IX of 1833, a similar neglect to enforce the provisions of Sections 4, 5, and 7 of Regulation XII of 1817 gradually rendered the putwaree register to a great extent obsolete, and was probably due to the above-noticed action on the part of the Board. Putwarees are appointed at the instance of the zemindars. Their names are registered in the Collectorate on the application of the zemindar, and they are by law available for any general purpose. Their services were utilized at the late general census. The remuneration of a putwaree varies according to the importance of the village or villages to which he is attached, being generally from Rs. 2 to Rs. 4 a month, exclusive of perquisites. Putwarees are always Kaiets, and their office is hereditary. They are simply accountants; they but rarely collect rents for the zemindars, and where the zemindar allows such a practice, he must do it at his own risk, as he cannot sue the putwaree for monies received or for accounts. They keep no shops; well-to-do putwarees lend money and grain on interest on their own account."

18. The history of the institution is so fully given in the Board's annual administration report for last year, and in Mr. Jenkins' report thereto appended, that I abstain from entering into these subjects here. I may however make the following extract from my report to the Board:—

"The institution appears to have retained a very different amount of vitality in different districts. So far from being a dead letter, as Mr. Mangles calls it, I found the regulation about the registration, appointment, dismissal, and payment of putwarees in full force in Shahabad in 1860; and in 1862 I made a strong appeal to the Commissioner and the Board to resuscitate the one enactment of the law which had become a dead letter, viz. that compelling them to file their papers in the Collectorate. In Shahabad they had continued to do this till 1854. Mr. Cockburn's application on this subject in 1863, and the result, is given in the report. I can only add that I am still of opinion that this should be done, and that it is especially necessary in Behar, where the blowlie system is so much in force, and where, if the danabundee is for any reason delayed, the subsequent claim for rent is open to so much doubt, fraud, and dispute. At present, if a zemindar is quarrelling with his ryots or his shareholders, and refuses to make a danabundee, the crop remains on the ground till it is lost; he can afterwards go into court, and can very generally make out a claim for rent against the ryot, while there is absolutely no law under which the ryots can get the danabundee made or get permission, save by an extensive order by the Magistrate giving the assistance to the police, to cut his share of the crop. I urged this in 1862 as a blot on our rent law, and I urge

it again now. If we had putwarees' papers regularly filed, we could always in a disputed case get a fair estimate at what the shares under a danabundee would probably have been; and the putwaree should always be one source of information to whom the Collector should look as to whether a danabundee was made, and an assistant under supervision for making it. I believe that in these districts by merely enforcing the existing law we could bring the putwaree once more as a village servant under the Collector's control; and once under his control, he would furnish the connecting link between our executive officers and the occupiers of the land, which we so much need. I agree, however, with my predecessor that to make the system complete we should also re-appoint supervisors in the shape of canoongoes, whether called by that or some more appropriate name."

19. The remuneration of putwarees varies from Rs. 1-8 to

Under the bhowli system—

"Mangun," at 2½ chutacks from the gross produce.

"Nocha," at 2 chutacks from the gross produce.

Under the nugdee system—

"Hajjutana," at 2 per cent. of the amount in luggit.

"Mangun," at 2½ seers per beegah from the cultivator.

Rs. 4 per mensem, besides perquisites as noted on the margin. A well-to-do putwaree sometimes enters into mahajanee transactions with the villagers, but putwarees never keep shops.

20. On the matter of the putwarees' remuneration, I extract the following from Dr. Buchanan's survey of Patna and Shahabad made sixty years ago:—

"He (the agent) is allowed a clerk (putwaree) at from Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 3. Both gomastahs and putwarees have almost everywhere illicit grains, which chiefly arise from the division of the crops, they conniving with the tenant against the landlord. I am told that no putwaree, for instance, spends less than Rs. 6 or Rs. 7 a month."

21. No traces of any old police organization have come to light

Traces of old police organization. in this division, except perhaps in the district of Patna, in which a few individuals still call themselves fouzders, the official title of their

ancestors. Under the Mahomedan Government there was a fouzdar in each pergunnah throughout that portion of the district (comprising the pergunnahs Bullia Manair, Foalwari, and Massouarah) through which the chief roads and means of communication passed, his duty being to keep watch along the lines of roads in his pergunnah. In return for his services the fouzdar was "allowed to hold a certain quantity of land rent-free. The nominal fouzders of the present day have all dwindled into ordinary village chowkidars under Regulation XX of 1872, but they still in some few instances retain the title and the land."

22. The Joint-Magistrate of Buxar has also given the following information regarding the title and duties of the fouzdar at that station under the Mahomedan Government:—

"The duties of Magistrate and Collector of revenue were performed by a person bearing the title of fouzdar, who had at his disposal a number of men styled 'nujeebs.' The nujeebs did the work of collecting chuprassees and constables. For each batch of (say) from fifty

to a hundred villages there was a person called in the Bhojpoor Pergunnah a 'tapeheya,' or in the Chowsat Pergunnah a 'chowdree,' to whom the chowkidars had to report and who kept the fouzdar acquainted with whatever occurred in the villages under him. The jurisdiction of the tapeheyas and chowdrees were called tuppehs, and there were 18 tuppehs in the Bhojpoor Pergunnah. The tapeheyas and chowkidars were in this way the eyes of the fouzdar, while nujees were his hands. The fouzdar also had the power to give jurisdiction to the more important zemindars to try and punish trifling offences committed within the limits of their lands, but all serious cases had to be sent in. In serious cases the fouzdar was also bound to consult with a pundit if the criminal was a Hindu, and a 'mofti' if he happened to be a Mussulman. When sentence of death was passed, it had to be referred to the Nazim at Patna, who again, in the case of criminals of position, if he concurred in the sentence, had to refer it to the Emperor of Delhi before the criminal could be executed. The whole of this organization, with the exception of the chowkidar, has now disappeared."

23. I have been unable to obtain any further information on this subject.

BHAUGULPORE DIVISION.

No. 88, dated Bhaugulpore, the 14th January 1873.

From—J. W. DALRYMPLE, Esq., Commissioner of the Bhaugulpore Division,
To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

IN answer to your circular No. 22 of the 16th July last, I have the honor to submit the following report on the subject of indigenous agency existing in all the districts of this division, including the Sonthal Pergunnahs.

2. All the district officers have already, in their reports submitted to, the Inspector-General of Registration, explained fully and clearly the indigenous agency employed in the late census operations. The Inspector-General will doubtless take up the subject in his general report.

3. The principal and perhaps the only indigenous agent employed in census work in the regulation districts of this division was the putwaree or the village accountant. He was generally worked through the police and not through the village communities or the zemindars, who as a rule rendered no assistance whatever beyond allowing the use of the services of the putwarees.

4. There are putwarees everywhere in the regulation districts, but they are not of the type contemplated by law. They have long ceased to perform any public duties as officers of Government, and have become nothing but servants of the zemindars, whose rents they collect, though not always, and whose accounts they keep. Jumma-wasil-bakee (demand, collections, and balance) account of every ryot in the village, with the quantity of land enjoyed by each, and other particulars, are kept up by the putwarees. These are produced before the officers of Government and sworn to as correct, whenever called for the purposes of settlements and butwarahs by the revenue officers.

5. The appointment, suspension, and dismissal of the putwarees rest practically entirely with the zemindars, though there are occasionally appeals under Regulation XII of 1817.

The office is hereditary, provided a worthy member of the family is forthcoming, and provided the present incumbent is not dismissed with disgrace.

6. No reliable registers of putwarees have ever been kept up in any district of this division. In Bhaugulpore there are none. In Monghyr and Purneah there are registers, and occasional mutations of names take place; but the number of men entered is absurdly below the number employed, and mutations are, I believe, made solely for interested purposes, such as establishing a claim to land, and so forth. The law regarding putwarees has become to a very great extent a dead letter, and I am doubtful if its provisions were ever acted up to. I am unable to trace the origin of these putwarees; they are said to have existed from time immemorial.

7. The putwarees are, as a rule, ignorant and unprincipled, but they are men of position in their village, and are held in much esteem by the ryots. To improve their status recourse must be had to fresh legislation.

8. The putwarees generally belong to the class of Kaeths or writers, and are remunerated first, by a fixed salary varying from Rs. 2 to 5; second, by an allowance of one or two pice in the rupee, to be collected from the ryots. This is called locally *hug putwaree*.

9. The putwaree is never a shop-keeper as far as I know, but he is occasionally a money-lender, and always a cultivator. The small and inadequate remuneration which he gets from the landlord is never sufficient to meet all his wants; he must therefore have recourse to other means of subsistence.

10. Next in order to the putwarees I would mention the jeth-ryot. The term literally means the principal ryot. He is termed differently in different places, as a mundul, or mohton, or malgoozar. I am unable to give the origin and history of this agency also; but there cannot be any doubt that the office is the remnant of an ancient institution already deprived of its strength, and dying out more and more every day. I am inclined to believe that formerly the jeth-ryot, or mundul, or mohton, or malgoozar, as he may be called, was all in all in the village. He did all the work for the zemindar in his own village, with the assistance of other agency now almost extinct, for in certain places, though few in number, such an arrangement is still found to exist.

11. As a rule there is one headman (jeth ryot, mundul, mohton, or malgoozar) for every village. He is selected by the zemindar as the most trustworthy person, and the largest cultivator amongst the body of ryots. The post is not hereditary, but usually descends from father to son, if the latter can maintain his position and superior condition. He can however be changed at the pleasure of the zemindar.

12. The general functions of the headman are not the same everywhere. In villages where he and the putwaree, as is generally the case, constitute the village government, his general duties are to carry out the orders of the zemindar, to give assistance in getting ryots together for settlement, &c., to be their surety if necessary, to look after the embankments and irrigation works (if any), and to protect the village boundaries. His pre-eminence and power over the other ryots is always recognized by the landlord, and he obtains his lands at more favorable rents than the others; but he is never paid in cash. In cases where he is the collector, he receives a commission of one or two pice in the rupee.

13. Besides the putwaree and the jeth—ryot, the indigenous agency which still forms the village institution in certain parts of this division consists of a mokuddum, chakladar, barahil, goraet, and chowkidar. The mokuddum's principal duty is collection. He also looks into matters connected with the general management of the village. The chakladar's functions are to protect the village boundaries and to look after water-courses and embankments. The barahils and goraets are merely peons. The chowkidars will

be referred to separately below. All these members were formerly paid by hugs or abwabs over and above the actual rent levied from the ryots. But as the legislature has stopped these, and as they are no longer decreed on complaint by the courts of justice, the greatest part of the zemindars in this division have gradually suffered the institution to die out. In places where it still prevails I have no doubt that it will ere long become extinct.

14. It will not be out of place here to notice the "newa" or the barber, the "tahl" or the servant, and the "kumar" or the pot-maker, who are, strictly speaking, also village officials. The two former are never paid for their services either at the zemindar's house or at the cutocherry in the village, nor is the latter for the earthen pots supplied by him at these places. In certain parts of the country, however, the barber and the pot-maker enjoy a small quantity of land either at quit-rent or without rent.

15. There are no permanently constituted punchayets in this division; but village councils occasionally meet generally for the purpose of settling caste and social questions, and also frequently, in case of crime in the village, to frame a plan of action in regard to the impending police inquiry. They are dissolved as soon as the question referred to them is disposed of. Their power over the society is very great. They put people out of caste or admit to caste, and fine. Every one has a great dread of the punishment the punchayet may inflict on them, for they must submit to their decision, as the whole village would support the punchayet.

16. Phareedars, foudjars, and buxees, do not exist in any of the districts in this division. The only remnant of an old police organization is the chowkidar, whose condition and functions have, during late years, entirely changed. Every village or a cluster of villages has a chowkidar. The chowkidars are nominated by the zemindar and appointed by the District Superintendent of Police, who also suspends or removes them for neglect of duty or misconduct. They are very poorly remunerated, either by paid salary, which is realized in proportion to their means from the ryots, or by land which they possess rent-free. Their functions are to keep watch in their villages at night, to attend at the thannah, and to give information of offences, of the breaking out of epidemic diseases, and of unnatural and suspicious deaths. They are often made use of by the constables or process peons for the service of warrants, summonses, and processes. When the Magistrate, the police, or any other public functionary is on duty in the villages, the chowkidars attend his camp and carry out orders. They are generally selected from the very low classes of Doshads and Domes, because they have sometimes to watch and perhaps to remove dead bodies, which no other class would condescend to do. They are generally dishonest, and thieves, or leagued with thieves; but they know all that goes on in their own and in neighbouring villages; and success in police management, in my opinion, almost entirely depends on how they are handled.

17. Except in certain portions of the sub-division of Godda adjoining to the district of Bhaugulpore, where the village system described above exists, there are no putwarees in the Sonthal

Pergunnahs. In the census operations the local agents or gomastahs of the zemindars and ghatwals, the mustajirs or headmen of the villages, chowkidars and villagers capable to read and write, were the agency employed.

18. In the Sonthal Pergunnahs, which is inhabited by different races, it is difficult to trace out one common and general institution. In the Sonthal villages, however, the manjhi or the mustajir or the village headman, the paramanik or the assistant manjhi, and the goraet or the village messenger, form an institution with a pergunite over a number of villages which seems always to have existed among that race. Their present functions and duties are different in different posts of the pergunnahs. Manjhis of the Deoghur sub-division, where the regular police is in force, have no police functions, while those of the other sub-divisions, where the village police still prevails, have.

19. The manjhi, besides, collects the rents of the village and reports the commission of all crimes. The office descends from father to son, and in reward of his services he is entitled to a certain amount of land (in proportion to the extent of the village in which he presides) free of all rent. This is called *mân* land. As a rule, the manjhi or mustajir is also a cultivating ryot.

20. From what has been said above, it most not be understood that throughout the pergunnahs the mustajirs are manjhis and *vice versa*, but that generally the manjhis are mustajirs. In the khas estate, Damin, all the manjhis are mustajirs. Their appointment, suspension, and dismissal rest with Government. They possess *mân* land, and are also paid a commission of 8 per cent. on all collections they make.

21. The manjhi, except in Deoghur, is the head of the village police; he carries out the orders of the Government officers, serves processes, &c.

22. The manjhis are subordinate to the pergunites, who exercise control and supervision over a certain number of villages. They are appointed by the Government or the zemindar (as the case may be). They are in the Damin paid at the rate of 2 per cent. on the collections of all the subordinate manjhis. They are held responsible for the due payments of rents by manjhis. Their duty is to see that these behave properly, and that the roads, bunds, boundary pillars, and circuit bungalows, are kept in proper repair; to carry out all orders from the *hakim*; and to see that all crimes are duly reported. The pergunites have *desh-manjhis* or *chuckladars* under them, who act as their peons.

23. The paramanik and the goraet are appointed by the manjhi. They also possess *mân* lands. The former is the manjhi's assistant in all matters, and the latter his messenger in communicating intelligence to superior officials.

24. I have omitted to mention two other functionaries of the Sonthal village institution, viz. the *jog* manjhi, or officer who presides over marriages, &c., and the learee or priest. These are selected by the villagers, and possess, like the others, *mân* or rent-free lands.

25. The village punchayet system is very common among the Sonthals, and is a cherished institution. All the indigenous agents of

a Sonthal village described above are the members of the punchayet: every village has its council or manjhi thân, where the committee assemble and discuss the affairs of the village and its inhabitants. All petty disputes, both of a civil and criminal nature, are settled there. Those that are of too weighty a nature to be decided by the village punchayet are referred to a punchayet consisting of five neighbouring manjhis under the control of the pergunite, and if this special council are unable to decide any matter, it is then brought to the notice of the *hakim*. The punchayet disposes of all disputed questions connected with society, and subjects the guilty to punishment. This system of self-government constitutes a fair bond of union amongst the Sonthals. They look with great suspicion on any measure calculated to destroy these functions

26. Among the pahari villages in the hills the sirdars are the heads of villages. They are in the same position as manjhis. They have their naibs and other subordinates to assist them.

ORISSA DIVISION.

No. 178½, dated Cuttack, the 29th November 1872.

From—T. E. RAVENSHAW, Esq., Commissioner of the Orissa Division,
To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Dept.

IN reply to circular No. 22 of 16th July 1872, I have the honor to submit the following information :—

CUTTACK DISTRICT.

2. The agents actively employed in the late census were as follows :—

Small zemindars.	Schoolmasters.
Mokuddums.	Canoongoes.
Surberakars.	Putwarees.
Mustajirs or izaradars.	Beheras.
Tehsildars and paid servants of zemindars and mokud- dums, &c.	

There was no paid agency at all employed for the enumeration.

3. I am not aware that the census has brought to light any indigenous agency the existence of which was before unknown, though it has certainly demonstrated that a great deal more can be made of the agency which does exist than was before thought possible.

4. There appears to be no class in this district resembling the pradhan or mundul of Bengal, and who is recognized as the regular village head. The prominent village notables, whose existence may be traced from earlier times, are the following :—

Mokuddum.	Putwaree.
Surberakar.	Behera.
Canoongoe.	

The two former are the holders of well-known and ancient hereditary tenures, whose rights were recognized at the settlement. They are, in fact, the lords of the village where their tenure is situated, and exercise a considerable amount of local influence, especially when they are the representatives of the original holders. The mokuddumee is altogether a higher class of tenure than the surberakaree, and a higher rate of malikana is attached to it.

5. The canoongoe is simply now a servant of Government, and is to the Collector in revenue what the police are to the Magistrate in criminal matters. He is paid a regular salary in this district: no jagheer is attached to the office.

6. Putwarees existed in large numbers previous to the settlement, but it was found that the office to a great extent existed in name only, and that the zemindars either themselves occupied the jagheers, or that

the holders were their personal servants. The jagheers were therefore largely resumed, and the number of putwarees reduced to about 100 for the district. Practically, for many years past, the putwarees have ceased to exercise the functions for which they were especially appointed, and, so far from being the village accountants, are more frequently the servant and rent collector of the zemindar. The putwaree of the present day can hardly be called a village notable, and he exercises but little influence.

7. "Behera" is the title held by the headman or representative of a caste, and his influence in all social matters is necessarily very great, as all disputes or irregularities come before him. The jurisdiction of a behera extends over a large circle of villages.

8. There are no such things as standing punchayets; but punchayets are very commonly resorted to for the disposal of caste and other disputes.

POOREE DISTRICT.

9. In Pooree, as in other districts noticed by the Lieutenant-Governor, the indigenous functionaries of the village community have been declining, while the zemindar's power has been rising, though the zemindar's power has not been increasing in proportion to the decay of the village headmen.

10. If a line be drawn from Banpore in the north-west to the Devi river in the south-east, it will traverse Pooree district in the direction from where the disintegration has been least to where it has been most completed. In Khoordah the institutions of Hindu village society are still living, though dormant, and they still bear purely Hindu names in that part of the country. Under the old Rajahs, each village (gram) had two functionaries—the pradhan or man of action, and the bhoi or accountant. A set of such villages, called a "bissi," was administered by a bissoi, under whom were a khandait (literally swordsmen) or chief man of action, and a bhoimul or head accountant. The khandait, the pradhan, and so on, exercised police authority, while the other officials, as their name implies, were registrars or accountants. In the case of a hamlet (patna), a danduasi (literally a rodman or staffman) sufficed to keep watch and ward. Occasionally there were other organs exercising special functions. Thus, in an extensive bissi the bissoi would have under him a kauribhagya (literally a share taken of cowries) as his accountant. Again, there would occasionally be a kotkoran (literally special accountant). All these names, and to some extent the corresponding functions, still survive in Khoordah, but they are now-a-days lumped in the generic name of "surberakar."

11. Passing from Khoordah we come to a belt of country, Lembai and Sirian, Rahang, Chowbeesood, where the disintegration has proceeded more than in Khoordah, but less than in the rest of the district. The four territories which I have named, until a comparatively recent period, formed part of the extensive domains of the Rajah of Khoordah. The sixteen sasans, or brahmanic communities of immigrants from Jajpore, settled by the old Pooree Rajahs, still attest the ancient régime. In other villages we find headmen with names similar to those of Khoordah,—the pradhan or the surberakar, with proprietary rights, and also enjoying his heta (literally benefice) or service land.

12. Passing on to Kotdesh, we come to memorials of Mahomedan influence. These numerous institutions of headman, which have been gradually undergoing extinction during the last generation, are called by an Arabic military name, the "mokuddum" (literally the man who steps in front or faces at the head of the file). The institutions corresponded very much to the surberakar of Khoordah, but was modified somewhat to suit the Mogul institutions. Where a mokuddum originally had the fortune to be enrolled as a mazkuri (literally enumerated) mokuddum, he generally was allowed at our settlement to pay his quota direct to the treasury, and so he is now merged with the zemindars and styled a zemindar. In like manner, under the Moguls the bissoi or khandait was made a zemindar or chowdry, the bhomul was turned into a canoongoe, and the bhoi into a putwaree.

13. The canoongoe still survives in name, but he is no longer a local functionary as before. He is now part of a highly centralized machinery, and he is paid as such from head-quarters like any other stipendiary of the empire. The putwaree also is disappearing. He ceased to be of any importance, even in name, from the time when putwaree papers were discontinued at the introduction of Act X.

14. Proceeding with the imaginary line which I have already drawn, we come to the country south-east of Kotdesh. In these most of the village functionaries have disappeared, and society consists mainly of landlord and tenantry. The chief remaining agencies of the village are the chowkidar or chattia, the man who watches property, the village barber who does the shaving, and the village washerman who does the washing. Here, as in other parts of the districts, and also as in other districts than this, these constitute the principal indigenous secular agency of the village, the chowkidar looking after crimes, while the barber and washermen are incidentally the guardians of village chastity and morality.

15. So much for the individualized indigenous agency of the rural society. I come now to the punchayet or the corporate indigenous agency of rural society. Here it is necessary to make a distinction between two widely different institutions known by that common name. For convenience I shall call the one body the "standing punchayet," and the other the "special punchayet."

16. The special punchayet, or so to speak the punchayet *ad hoc*, is the assemblage convened to adjudicate on a specific difficulty. This institution is in vogue with the superior class of society, more especially the twice-born castes—Brahmans, Khetryas, and Baisyas, or those more modern castes which aspire to be successors of these three. These classes have no standing punchayet, but they convene one as occasion may require: for example, to decide over a betrothal or over a scandal about illicit connexion, and so on. In former times punchayets of this kind were also resorted to to try cases of assault and of money claims; but this practice is now dying out, because the dissatisfied party can traverse the decision in a regular court, criminal or civil.

17. The punchayet as a standing institution is peculiar to classes of society, namely—

- (1) The minor trading classes, of whom the teli and the guria may be taken as a type.

- (2) The menial classes, of whom the pān and the mether may be taken as an example. The former are some times nicknamed the pataki (literally fallen), and the latter asparshiya (literally untouchable). These may be rendered freely, and indeed, relatively speaking, with considerable accuracy, as "the publicans and the sinners." With them the punchayet is a standing institution; for they are always falling into jeopardy of ceremonial uncleanness, and besides they have often to assume the defensive as a body against other classes of less precarious status.

18. With regard to the procedure of these two bodies, the special punchayet of the twice-born castes usually does its work for nothing. Where it exacts a penalty or levies a subscription, the proceeds are applied not to the members of the punchayet, but for some object of general benefit to the caste. On the other hand, the members of a standing punchayet being naturally poorer men, requisition one or other or both parties in dieting for the meeting for the time being.

BALASORE DISTRICT.

19. The indigenous agency employed in census work was chiefly that of surberakars and mokuddums, barooas, and other village headmen.

20. As to the origin and history of these persons, I am unable to give any information. As far as my reading in the vernacular literature of former times has gone, I am disposed to believe that from the earliest times the village community, with its headman elected by the villagers, has been in existence. The powers and responsibilities of the headmen have varied from time to time in the most irregular and capricious manner, and whatever may have been the cause, it is now certain that in the Lower Provinces you will nowhere find them holding a position equal in rank or privileges to the desmukhs or patels of Bombay and Madras, or even the lumberdars of Upper India. It is undoubtedly true that the tendency, since the introduction of our revenue system in the Lower Provinces, has been to allow their powers and position to be overridden by those of the zemindar.

21. *Purshathi* ପୁରଶଠି.—The origin of this class of men is stated by local tradition to be, that they were created in former times (probably not later than 1450 A.D.) by zemindars wishing to extend the cultivation of the country, which we know from native historians to have been but thinly peopled, north of the Kansbans. Previous to the date above quoted, the Rajahs of Orissa did not extend their sway north of that river, and the country between that and the frontier of Bengal was all desert and jungle. Centuries later, this state of things existed in a modified form. The road from Bengal to Orissa was hardly opened at all, and very little communication existed between the two provinces. The Mahomedans in Akbar's time (close of the sixteenth century) were the first to open thorough communication. To this day the country between Balasore town and Jellasore is called the Barakoshi or twelve-cross road, and was long considered almost impassable. The purshathis are found chiefly between the Kansbans and Sooburnekha precisely in this part. When a zemindar wished to

extend his cultivation, he deputed a person to settle and clear a tract of country. This was the purshathi. He bought the land from the zemindar, with a reservation of proprietary rights of a certain kind to the latter. At the settlement the purshathis were recognized as subordinate tenure-holders, and the zemindar received 10 per cent. malikana, the purshathi 30 per cent. If the estate is sold, the right of the latter remains intact, and cannot be disturbed by the purchaser, whether he purchase at a Government sale for arrears of rent or at a private sale. The purshathi exercises all the powers of a zemindar. He collects the rents, hands over to the zemindar 70 per cent., being 60 per cent. for Government, and 10 per cent. for the zemindar's malikana. The latter has no power of interfering in the internal management of the estate. If the purshathi reside on the estate, he acts in all respects as village headman. If, as is often the case, he is non-resident, there is another surberakar or village headman under him, paid not by malikana, but by regular salary. He is also called "shikami kharidar."

22. Among the settlement proceedings there are numerous cases in which the rights of the purshathi or kharidar are inquired into and settled. Thus eight patnas in Surhar were claimed by Tribikram Chowdry on the strength of kibalas produced by him. The Deputy Collector, after examining the documents and hearing the zemindar's objections, found that Tribikram and his ancestors had been in possession continuously from a time prior to British rule under the title of "purshathi" or "kharidar"—purshathi of the first grade in certain patnas, and of the second grade in others. The Collector on appeal made him purshathi of the first grade in all the patnas. In the settlement evidad all the purshathis' names in the Surhar estate are entered with a note that they are to enjoy the same malikana as mokuddums. In the Commissioner's confirming roobokary it is stated that the purshathi is one who has purchased land from a zemindar in order to found on it a village, and that he is the malik or owner thereof, subject to payment to the zemindar of the rent minus his 30 per cent. malikana. The tenure could be sold or transferred at will.

23. *Mokuddum*.—This is also a subordinate tenure-holder, and was originally the headman of a village. He gets 25 per cent. of the malikana and pays the rent to the zemindar, being 60 per cent. for Government and 15 per cent. for zemindar's malikana. The office is hereditary and transferable, but the zemindar can sell the tenure for arrears of rent. In their case as in that of the purshathi, the zemindar does not interfere in the internal management of the estate, nor take upon himself any responsibility for loss by accidents or convulsions of nature, and the like.

24. *Surberakar* is the regular village headman. He is remunerated by a commission of 15 per cent., or 10 per cent. on the collections. He is appointed by the zemindar. There are two kinds of surberakars. The mourusee or hereditary surberakar is, as his name imports, hereditary headman. The first of his race had been appointed by the zemindar, who however has precluded himself by the appointment from interference in the succession. The non-hereditary surberakar is appointed, on each occurrence of a vacancy, by the zemindar.

25. Even a hereditary surberakar may be dispossessed for misconduct by the zemindar, though, owing to the prevailing ignorance of the terms of the settlement, it never happens that they are dispossessed; their rights are sold by civil or revenue courts in total defiance and neglect of the law. The non-hereditary surberakar is in fact a mere servant of the zemindar, displaceable at pleasure. Both classes collect the rents and remit them to the zemindar, who rarely, if ever, interferes in the management of the estate. They exercise great authority in the village, being generally called "hakim" by the people, and are terrible despots as a rule.

26. *Putwaree*.—Although bearing this title, the persons I am now about to mention are a totally different class from the regular purwarees under Regulation XII of 1817. They are merely collecting agents, and are paid by money wages. They are of course displaceable at will, and are found only in a few places, not being recognized by the settlement.

27. *Pradhan—Karji*.—I do not see much difference between these two classes. They are appointed by the zemindar and are paid by money wages. They exercise great influence in the village; but the post is not hereditary. I believe the padhan or pradhan is a relic of the old village headman, degraded now into a mere rent collector. He is quite at the mercy of the zemindar. The karji, on the other hand, is a recent creation, a mere agent put in by the zemindar. The padhan is always a resident of the village, and a thani ryot, whereas the karji is not always a ryot or even a resident.

28. *Barooa* is a thani ryot, generally one of the largest cultivators in the village. He is appointed in some cases by the zemindar, in other cases he is elected by the ryots subject to the zemindar's approval. The position is often honorary; the barooa is regarded as the head ryot and spokesman; when he is merely this, he gets no pay. If he add to this the task of collecting rents, he receives an allowance in money. He is removable at pleasure of the zemindar. This post also, I presume, is a relic of the old village headmanship, though much degraded.

29. There are no village punchayets in Balasore of the kind alluded to in Government letter under reply. If any caste question arises, a caste punchayet is convened for the occasion only.

30. There are forty putwarees under Regulation of 1817 appointed at the settlement and remunerated by grants of land. Their functions are those described in the regulation. They do not collect rent for the zemindars, with the exception of three in Bhograi, who collect rents, and are paid in cash. They are chiefly of the Karan or writer caste; but there are Brahmins, Chasas, Rajus, and other castes among them. They do not keep shops or lend money.

31. But little trace remains of the old police organization beyond a few paiks and chowkidars; particulars of these will be found specially reported on in Government printed selections—"The Village Watch," pages 55 to 62.

No. 571, dated Calcutta, the 4th February 1873.

From—J. WARE EDGAR, Esq., Offg. Junior Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal,
To—The Commissioner of the Orissa Division.

I AM directed to thank you for the very interesting report on the agency employed in taking the census in the several districts of your division, contained in your No. 178 of the 29th November last.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor fully concurs in your remark that the census has certainly demonstrated that a great deal more can be made of the agency which does exist than was before thought possible.

3. The account regarding the Pooree district is, I am to say, especially interesting, showing by existing facts the gradual change under our rule from the old Hindu self-governing system with all its grades of headmen and record-keepers of the hundreds, headmen and accountants of villages, staffmen of hamlets, and thani ryots—the freemen of the community—through the stages by which all these institutions disappear, and society resolves itself into two classes, of landlords without duties and tenants without rights, over whom a foreign Government acting through paid officials can exercise no sufficient control or guidance.

4. The Lieutenant-Governor had hoped to make a beginning towards restoring a measure of village self-government by means of village municipalities moulded on the old lines, and we can now only do what little we can to save the remains of old institutions by protecting the people, so far as our imperfect means admit, from oppressions actually contrary to law. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that you will foster the indigenous institutions still left so far as you are able, and at all times remember the remark above quoted from your 3rd paragraph that “a great deal more can be made of the agency which does exist than was before thought possible.”

5. In like manner, in treating the putwaree question, which is being separately dealt with, you must bear in mind the statements contained in your letter that putwarees, or the old bhoodees, existed in large numbers before the settlement, and that it is only by our action that they have been so much reduced as they now are.

CHOTA NAGPORE.

No. 8Ct., dated Camp Purulia, the 28th August 1872.

From—COLONEL E. T. DALTON, C.S.I., Commissioner of Chota Nagpore,
To—C. BEERNARD, Esq., Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal,
General Department.

IN reply to your letter No. 2452 of the 16th ultimo, I have the honor to state that the headmen of villages, where there were such persons, or the farmers or proprietors or other persons in charge of or collecting the rents of villages, all assisted in the operations of the census enumerators; but the headmen are, as a rule, utterly illiterate, and it was only by oral communication, and by accompanying the enumerators to assist them in obtaining information from all classes of villagers, that they could assist, and this assistance, I understand from the district reports, was utilized to the fullest extent, and it was loyally rendered. The same remark applies to the Tributary Mehals. In them the responsibility of the village headmen—goantia, gonju, or pradhan—is, in all such matters, fully enforced; but they too are illiterate, and it was necessarily by enumerators paid by the chiefs that the returns were filled up.

Hazareebaugh, No. 690, dated 28th July 1872.

Lohardugga, No. 1684, dated 7th August 1872, with enclosure.
Singbhoom, No. 401, dated 30th July 1872.

Maunbhoom, No. 1900, dated 7th August 1872.

2. I submit in original the replies received from the district officers on the questions asked regarding the headmen of villages and village institutions, but will proceed to give my own views on the subject.

3. In regard to indigenous population and village constitution Ramgurh portion of the Hazareebaugh district and the Palamow sub-district are much on a par. In both a chero or Kharwar chief ruled, and becoming Hindus in religion and custom, and aspiring to be acknowledged as pure Hindus of good caste, they were disposed to favor people who were what they aspired to be. Giving them villages as sub-proprietors or as farmers was the easiest method of inducing them to settle; and thus was commenced a system which in course of time caused the disappearance of the ancient national or tribal headmen, except in hill and jungle tracts where the forest tribes were able to hold their own, or the foreigners cared not to compete with them.

4. Thus, in the great Ramgurh estate, the only hereditary tribal headmen existing are the Sonthal manjhis, whose position is explained in paragraphs 5 and 6 of Colonel Boddam's letter, and it has been often explained; other villages are managed by a sub-proprietor or a ticcadar (*i.e.* farmer). The farms are frequently held by the same families for generations, and thus the lessees acquire the influence of tribal headmen.

5. In Palamow, the kharwars occupying the hilly country between the plains and Sirgoojah highlands have also nominally retained their manjhis (as they too call their headmen), but they are generally improvident, idle people who have lost their influence and position. This has been in a great measure transferred to the "sahus" (Hindu traders) to whom they and their ryots are indebted.

6. Khurruckdeah, the northern part of the Hazareebaugh district, was in ancient times a large raj. The chief was a Hindu of the same family as the Benares and Bhattiah family. A portion called the khalsa was in his own hands, but farmed; but from very early times the greater portion of Khurruckdeah was held by indigenes of the Bhooya tribe on conditions of service. They were all called ghatwals, but the head assumed or received the titles of thakoors and tikaits, and some were called Rajahs.

7. The Rajah of Khurruckdeah was overthrown by the Mahomedan Government, but the ghatwals were not molested by the Moguls, and when we restored the Rajah, they could not again be brought under subjection to him and were separately settled with. To the Rajah was made over the khalsa villages only, and he has since been known as the Rajah of Dhunwar. I do not doubt that the ghatwalee villages were formerly under head ghatwals bound to serve under the tikait, but the British Government let the service slip from them without commuting it, and there are no longer any headmen of villages.

8. In the Chota Nagpore estate, which form two-thirds of the Lohardugga district, the majority of the population is composed of the Oraon and Munda people, whose village system has from very ancient times been modelled on the same plan. It is fully described in the extracts given in Mr. Oliphant's letter herewith submitted. Besides the system under which each village had its secular and spiritual head—the munda and pahan, a deputy munda or mahto, and subordinate officers—there were in former times heads of clusters of villages called Rajahs or mundas of the "parha," but these have now no recognised position except amongst the people themselves. A parha conclave is sometimes called to settle a dispute or question of tribal usages, and then the representative of the old parha munda presides. In the munda villages of the portions of the estate bordering on Singbhoom, the constitution is somewhat different. They are on the footing of ghatwalee villages. Over a cluster of villages there is a manki, who is a guardian of the peace and the chief of the cluster; and over each village a munda, who is the subordinate of the manki. There are besides five superior tenures called pergunnahs, the proprietors of which, all of munda extraction, used to be styled Rajahs. The heads of villages under them are or were also mundas, but many, in the hope of bettering their title, called themselves khutkatidars, and exercise the prerogative of a hereditary sub-proprietor.

9. There are many villages in Chota Nagpore established originally by Hindus of the great cultivating class called Kurmis. The leading man of the colony styles himself khutkatidar and mahto of the village. They are however generally dealt with as leaseholders, but seldom fail to obtain renewal.

10. In the Kolhan of the Singhbhum district we have retained the old Kol system of *mankis*, of *pirhis*, or *pirs* (same, I believe, as *parhas*), and *mundas* of villages. Their position is well known in the estates, for purely Ho or Kol villages the same system is mentioned, but in others the headman is generally called *pradhan*. I am myself of opinion that this title was originally confined to heads of *gowalla* villages. I know that the heads of Kurmi villages were usually styled *mahto*, but the title of *pradhan* is, according to Dr. Hayes, superseding all others for villages chiefly inhabited and held by Hindus. In the large Dulbhoom estate it is applied to the head of all but *ghatwalee* villages. In the latter the *sirdar* is over several; next to him is the *sadial*, who may be over one or more villages, and the subordinates are *tavedars*. To all these police duties in defined jurisdictions are assigned, the whole estate being sub-divided into such rural police jurisdictions. The office is so far hereditary that the next heir is allowed to succeed if fit, but may be turned out for misconduct.

11. The *pradhan* has usually a very secure position. He is generally the most influential *jeth-ryot* of the village, and the office is often continued in one family for many generations. Still it is not hereditary, and he holds the village on leases from time to time renewed, but renewal may be for reasons declined. In Singhbhum there are very few villages farmed to outsiders. I myself know of none, and the *pradhani* system I have always found most acceptable to the *ryots*. The *pradhan* seldom decides difficult questions on his own authority: brother *pradhans* and elders are invited to assist, and they form a *punchayet*. The *desh pradhan* is sometimes called in and presides.

12. Wherever there are *pradhans* there are *desh pradhans*. They hold an important position amongst the *gowallas* as arbiters in questions of caste. Dr. Hayes says the Kurmis have also their *desh pradhans*. They are not responsible village officers.

13. Although many *pergunnahs* of Maunbhoom adjoin Dulbhoom, the *pradhani* system is not now in force in that district. In some portion of the district bordering on Midnapore, the *munduls* occupy a precisely similar position, but elsewhere the common custom is to let the villages on short leases, and the leaseholder is called *izaradar*. This name is sometimes given even to the *manjhis* of Sonthal villages, but the old *izaradar* is by the old *zemindars* rarely displaced for new men.

14. The office is usually bestowed on the most respectable and substantial resident of the village, and he or his successors continue to hold it so long as the family maintain that position.

15. In the Bagmundi estate and other portions of the district bordering on Chota Nagpore, many villages have headmen called *muras* (which is the Bengali rendering of *mundas*) and they and the people under them are in fact *Munda Kols*. The priests of the Kol population, *bhumij* or *munda*, in the south-western parts of Maunbhoom, are called *lais* or *nais*, and they are sometimes found in the position of village headmen. The *ghatwalee* system is exactly the same as in Dulbhoom.

16. I do not consider there is such a thing as a fixed *punchayet* in any village. *Punchayets* are resorted to settle knotty points that arise, but they are constituted as required.

No. 690, dated Hazareebaugh, the 26th July 1872.

From—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL H. M. BODDAM, Deputy Commissioner of Hazareebaugh,

To—The Commissioner of Chota Nagpore.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum

No. 2452, dated 16th July 1872, from the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

No. 2046, dated 23rd July 1872, covering correspondence as per margin.

2. There are no munduls, village punchayets, putwarees, or indeed village headmen of any kind (except among the Sonthals) in this district.

3. In paragraph 10 of my letter No. 385, dated 9th May 1872, to the address of Mr. Beverley, a copy of which was forwarded to you with my No. 391 of the same date, I wrote that on the approach of the enumerator he was met in each village by the sub-tenure-holder and the headmen of the village, &c.

4. By the expression "headmen of the village," I alluded to the principal and most influential resident ryots of the village, and did not intend to convey any impression that there are what are termed "village headmen" in any village.

5. Among the Sonthals the manjhi (sometimes also called the pramanik) is the village headman. I cannot find that this office is hereditary; but the post of manjhi appears to devolve on shoulders of some elder who by age and experience is fitted for the post and is generally respected by the community.

6. The manjhi is assisted by the advice of the elders of the village, with whom he talks over all matters regarding the well-being of the community. By the manjhi's advice the village is entirely guided in all matters, and without his advice and sanction nothing is done, not even a plough put in the ground or a seed planted. He it is that is put forward to make the arrangements for the lease of the village, and through him all payments are made; and if the lease is taken from him, no Sonthal of the same village will take it, and if given to any but a Sonthal, the whole community will break up and dissolve, all the families going off to some other Sonthal village where they can find ground to till.

7. It is owing to this persistent dislike of a Sonthal to have any one but one of his own tribe over him as head that has gradually driven the Sonthals from the fairest parts of this district into the culturable but uncultivated parts, and into the jungles.

8. All the particulars mentioned in circular No. 1279 of the 13th April 1872 have been fully given in my report above alluded to.

No. 1664, dated Ranches, the 7th August 1872.

From—H. L. OLIPHANT, Esq., Deputy Commissioner of Lohardugga,

To—COLONEL E. T. DALTON, C.S.I., Commissioner of Chota Nagpore.

WITH reference to your memorandum No. 2046 of the 23rd ultimo, and in continuation of paragraph 12 of my census report, No. 1281 of the 29th June last, I have the honor to supply the additional information called for.

2. It appears to me that on a question of this kind, as far as relates to Chota Nagpore, I cannot do better than quote from the valuable report* which was submitted by Dr. Davidson to the then Governor-General's Agent, and I accordingly proceed to furnish you with the following extracts :—

* No. 247 of 26th August 1839.

3. "A Kol village community consists of the munda, mahton, pahan, bhandari, korait, and blacksmith: there are no hajams or dhobeas; the Kols shave themselves, and their women wash their clothes.

"The munda is the chief of the Bhooyas, and is generally considered to be in some sort the representative of the old munda, head of the village. He is a person of consequence in the village, and in all matters under discussion his opinion has much weight; besides which he is the person through whom any demands upon the Bhooyas from the owner of the village, whether of money or labor, are signified, and until he agrees to their justice they are pretty sure to be resisted by the other Bhooyas. He receives no salary or remuneration besides his Bhooyari land.

"The mahton is the most important person in the village; he assigns land to the ryots, gives the gootee, collects the rent and pays it to the owner or his representative, settles any disputes as amount of rent owed by the ryots, and, in short, is the person upon whom the settlement of the whole pecuniary affairs of the village depends. He receives one powa of 'rajbus' free of rent as his jagheer. The office of mahton is neither hereditary nor permanent; the owner may change the mahton whenever he pleases. Besides the jagheer, in some villages the mahton gets a fee of one or two pice from each ryot annually, but this is not usual.

"The pahan is the person whose duty it is to perform all the poojahs; for this he has a jagheer called 'dalikhatari.' He is also in general a person of influence in all transactions. The office of pahan is frequently hereditary, but not necessarily so.

"The bhandari is a sort of agent through whom the owner's orders to the ryots are signified; he gets any work done through them that may be in hand, and also assists the mahton in making the collections, and causes the ryots to attend upon him. He has a jagheer of one powa rent-free from the owner, and gets from each ryot in the village three kuraes or bundles of the crop as it is cut down,—one of goondlee, one of gora, and one of wet crop rice; each bundle may contain about two seers."

4. Again, Dr. Davidson writes in another place as follows :—

"There are no putwarees in this country, nor have there ever been any. The mahton of the village is in fact the putwaree, with the remarkable difference, it must be admitted, that the mahton never can read or write, nor can any of the Kols. To give an idea of how matters are managed between the Kols and their landowner, I shall proceed to give you an account of what takes place between a new ticcadar of a village and the ryots.

"On a day appointed the ticcadar proceeds to the 'ukhera,' or place of assembly, of the village, where he is met by the mahton, pahan,

bhandari, and as many of the ryots as choose to attend. He proceeds, agreeably to the dictation of the mahton, to write down the account of the cultivation of the different ryots, stating the number of powas and the rent cultivated by each ryot. Having furnished this account, any new ryots who may wish to have lands in the village, after having the quantity and rent settled, have a gootee given them ; but the old ryots have no gootee given. If any of the old ryots require any new land, a gootee is taken for that, but not for the old cultivation.

"The mahton collects the rent as the kists become due, according to the above-mentioned account given to the ticcadar, and all differences as to the amount of rent payable by a ryot, if any ever arise, which very seldom happens, are settled by the opinion of the mahton. So well does this mode answer in practice, that in point of fact a dispute as to the amount of rent owed by a ryot is of rare occurrence. When a ticcadar wishes to cheat a ryot, he accuses him of having cultivated more land than he is entitled to, or of owing him maswar (grain rent for dhan), or something else of that sort, and if such a thing as a dispute as to the amount of rent owed ever does arise, the mahton's evidence is generally considered conclusive by both parties."

5. The extracts above furnished seem to give as full an account of the functions of the various village officers as is required. I would remark, however, with reference to the first named official, the munda, that the munda described would appear to be the munda in those villages where there are also mahtons and pahans.

In certain parts of the district, however, such as the Mankiputhee in the Sonepur Pergunnah, and that tract known as the Panch Pergunnah, there are no such officials as mahton and pahan. In these parts the headman is the munda—generally speaking, a khutkatidar—and possessed of greater power and authority even than a mahton in other villages, and his office is an hereditary one.

6. With regard to the headmen in the sub-division of Palamow, I beg to enclose herewith copy of letter No. 294 of the 31st ultimo, from the Assistant Commissioner, for your information.

No. 294, dated Daltongange, the 31st July 1872.

From—L. R. FORBES, Esq., Extra Asst. Commr., Palamow Sub-division,
To—H. L. OLIPHANT, Esq., Deputy Commissioner, Lohardugga.

I HAVE the honor to submit the following report with reference to your No. 1564, dated 27th instant, forwarding correspondence named in the margin.

No. 2452, dated 16th July 1872, from Government of Bengal to Commissioner of Chota Nagpore.

Commissioner's No. 2046, dated 23rd July 1872, to address of Deputy Commissioner, Lohardugga.

2. The village headmen of the Palamow sub-district are of several, denominations, viz. mahton, manjhi, pahan, pradhans, jeth-ryots.

3. The mahton and manjhi class are the most numerous. The pahans are found here and there, chiefly in Chechhari. In a few villages only the pradhans are found. I have met them in Simah and Mankerituppehs. The jeth-ryots are chiefly confined to Belonjah and Jupla, but some are to be found in the Deogur estate.

4. The duties of all of these headmen are the same, though some have a greater responsibility than others. Their duties consist in superintending the agricultural concerns of the village, and are pretty nearly as follows :—

- (1) To measure the lands.
- (2) Settlement of uplands, &c.
- (3) Distribution of mowa trees.
- (4) To induce new ryots to come and settle; and where old ones have absconded, to replace them.
- (5) To renew gotee leases as they expire.
- (6) To collect the rents.
- (7) To lease out the forest produce and collect the rents thereof.
- (8) To collect the village cesses.
- (9) To collect the funds for the village poojahs.
- (10) To look after Government servants that visit the village, and see that they are properly cared for and get supplies.
- (11) To see all Government orders carried out, and collect any russad that the proprietor may be called upon to supply.

5. Village headmen are not universal in Palamow; they are chiefly confined to the south and south-west. In Oontari there are no headmen at all. In Belonjah there are many villages without jeth-ryots, but in Jupla every village has one.

6. The jeth-ryots get no remuneration, at least no fixed one; but the mathan and others, as a rule, hold a small area of land, generally a few kathas, free of rent.

7. Sometimes the bygah acts also as headman, but as a bygah only his duties are somewhat different. He then has nothing to do with the settlement of the land, but he is supposed to be intimately acquainted with the village boundaries; he is responsible that they are not infringed, and it is his duty to attend and point them out in case of a survey.

No. 401, dated Chybassa, the 30th July 1872.

From—DR. W. H. HAYES, Deputy Commissioner of Singbhoom,

To—The Commissioner of Chota Nagpore, Ranchee.

IN reply to your No. 2046, dated 23rd instant, calling for report on points referred to in Government letter No. 2452, dated 16th idem, I have the honor to state that the village headmen in this district are denoted as follows :—

I. In Dulbhoom, Seraikeyla, Khursowah, and Porohat, or where the community is Sadaut or not Kols and allied races—pradhans.

II. In Kolhan, or where the community comprise Kols and allied races—mundas.

(a.) The head of a group of munda villages—manki.

2. The functions of these men are—responsibility for rents, to afford assistance to police, and, in the Kolhan, to conduct themselves all police duties, and generally to assist in the executive administration of the district.

3. The ghatwals are the rural police in Dulbhoom and headmen of ghatwalee villages.

4. Chowkidars are the village watch in all the pradhani villages in Dulbhoom and Porohat. In the Kol and ghatwalee villages the munda and ghatwal take the place of the chowkidars. Kotwal and Dakoah are names denoting the same office in Seraikeyla and Khursowah.

5. I beg to refer you to my report submitted on the 28th March last on the assistance derived from landholders.

No. 1900, dated Purulia, the 7th August 1872.

From—COLONEL E. A. ROWLATT, Deputy Commissioner of Maunbhoom,
To—The Commissioner of Chota Nagpore.

WITH reference to your memorandum No. 2046 of the 23rd ultimo, and its enclosure from the Government, requesting information as to whether there are no headmen of villages in this district, I have the honor to submit the following report on the subject, which I do after having consulted those who have been the longest in the district and are the best acquainted with the people.

2. In the former letter of the Government noted in the margin, the inquiry was confined to the existence of munduls and village punchayets, and I did not understand that the inquiry went further. There are, it is true, numbers of persons called munduls in this district, but they are not the kind of munduls to which, I presume, reference was made. Every respectable man of the Soori caste, for instance, calls himself a mundul, but these munduls occupy no recognized position and are not the headmen of the village. There may be any number of them in one village, but beyond being substantial and respectable men, they are in no ways distinguished from the rest of the villagers, and have no duties to perform.

No. 1279 of the 13th
April 1872, from Officiat-
ing Under-Secretary to
Commissioner.

3. The only part of the district in which there are any munduls who are the headmen of the villages is in the south-east corner of the Raipoor pergunnah which borders on the Midnapore district. There they exist as in the Bengal districts, and are chiefly of the Sutgop or Chasha caste. They are the agents or nominees of the zemindar, and exercise the same functions as the munduls in Bengal in general, and it is through them that the whole of the village rents are paid.

4. The villages in this district are, as a general rule, inhabited by all sorts of classes mixed together, and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, it never has been the custom for the villagers as a body to appoint or recognize any one person as the headman or representative of the whole village. The practice of letting out the villages, each one separately in izarah, appears to have prevailed for a very long time, and it has therefore come to pass that the izaradar, who is generally a resident, and one of the most respectable men of the community, has exercised those functions which in other parts of Bengal and India in general are performed by persons called munduls, pradhans, mokheapruzzas, patels, &c. All minor disputes amongst the villagers regarding

their private affairs and the lands they cultivate are disposed of by the izaradar or reported by him to the landlord, between whom and the ryots the izaradar is the means of communication. They collect and pay the rents of the village to the landlord, receiving as remuneration a certain quantity of land rent-free which is called *mán*. They also assist the chowkidar in realizing his dues from the villagers, and are kept informed by the chowkidar of any crime or extraordinary occurrence which takes place in the village, and it is under his orders that the village chowkidar reports such occurrences to the police.

5. In the ghatwalee estates the sirdar ghatwals and the sirdars and sudyals of villages are the village headmen, and in the police jagheer villages the jagheerdar occupies the position and exercises all the functions that are performed by the izaradars in the zemindaree or mal villages; and the same may be said of those villages which are held as brahmoottur, depoottur, piroottur, and mohuteran, as here, the holder being generally a resident of the village, he is looked up to as the head and performs all the duties of the village chief. In the larger brahmoottur estates the villages are let out in izara, and there the izaradars occupy the same position as those of a similar official status in the zemindaree villages.

6. In mixed communities, where the izaradar is not a resident of the village, the terms "mahto" and "manjhi" are very commonly used to designate the village headman, who may be a man of any caste, whether Kaist, Gowalla, Koormee, or Kumar; and Brahmin manjhis are by no means uncommon.

7. In some villages where the lyah is a man of position and influence, he is, although strictly speaking the village priest, acknowledged and obeyed as the head of the village in secular matters also.

8. Amongst the Bhoomij population, which is chiefly met with in the southern and western parts of the district, the term "sirdar" is that used by which the headman of the village is known, but the title is not applied to him exclusively, for every Bhoomij of established respectability styles himself sirdar, and it even is common amongst these people, when asked, to reply that he is a sirdar by caste. In the western pergunnahs of the district named Patkoom and Baghmoondih, which border on the Lohardugga district, the term "sirdar" becomes changed into that of "moorah" or "munda," showing how nearly allied, if not precisely similar, the Bhoomijes of Maunbhoom are to the mundas of Chota Nagpore.

9. In purely Sonthal villages, or those where Sonthals largely predominate, the headman is always called manjhi. These manjhis, who also, like the Bhoomij chief sirdars, are usually the izaradars, represent the village in all matters of common interest, and where they are not, they generally assist the izaradar in the performance of his duties. They preside at all village gatherings, lead the chase, and decide all petty disputes, and have to be present at all marriages and religious ceremonies, and are also the channel of communication between the whole body of villagers and the izaradar, when the manjhi or sirdar does not hold that office himself.

10. Besides the Sonthal manjhis, who are the head of the village, these people have also what are called the pergunites or heads of pergun-

nahs or a cluster of villages, who are to the pergunnah what the manjhi is to the village. Matters of grave importance which cannot be settled by the manjhis are referred to the pergunita, who is the head of all the manjhis, and who being of superior rank to them, has greater influence and authority, especially in all matters requiring the combined action of the whole community.

11. The Koomrees, who are a numerous caste of people in this district, call their headmen mahtos or desh munduls; but amongst these people again, like the Bhoonijes and Sonthals, every respectable Koormee calls himself a mahto, and when asked his caste, invariably replies that he is a Koormee mahto.

12. There does not appear to be any well-recognized mode of appointing these headmen. They do not succeed to the office by descent, but acquire the position and title through social influence and wealth, but most commonly through individual force of character. Those who have the gift of speech, and are wise in council, generally rise to become leaders when these qualifications are combined with the possession of large numbers of cattle and extensive fields. The headmen of villages receive no regular contributions from villagers, but at marriages and festivals, donations, either in money or an offering of the produce of the fields, are made to them. They also realize something from fines levied for breach of caste rules and observances. In former days it is said that amongst the Koirees it used to be the custom if the headman demanded a present and this was refused, or he could not realize a fine, that he then would take the man's wife away and make her over for a consideration to another man, and thus secure payment of his demand; whilst among the wild tribe of Kherreahs, who are chiefly found in the forest-clad hills to the south, it is said that one of the duties of the sirdar, who has to attend all marriages, is to marry the girl himself if the bridegroom is unable to carry his bride up a tree on his back, which is the form of marriage in use amongst these primitive and uncivilized people.

No. 2413, dated Chota Nagpore, the 24th August 1872.

Memo. by—COLONEL E. T. DALTON, C.S.I., Commr. of Chota Nagpore.

COPY of the following letter submitted through the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, for information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor :—

No. 2412, dated Chota Nagpore, the 24th August 1872.

From—COLONEL E. T. DALTON, C.S.I., Commr. of Chota Nagpore,

To—H. BEVERLEY, Esq., Inspector-General of Registration.

I HAVE the honor to forward carefully classified abstracts of the census completed last season of the Tributary Mehals under me.

2. I was in great hopes of being by this time in a position to place before you the correct areas of these estates. I have not yet received the results of the completed surveys, but the following is from

information supplied some time ago by the Deputy Superintendent of Topographical Survey :—

	Square miles.	
Bonai	1,296·7	by topographical survey.
Chang Bhukar ...	727·1	by estimation. Survey incomplete.
Gangpur	2,809·8	ditto. Ditto.
Jashpur	1,806·7	ditto. Ditto.
Udaipur	719·0	ditto. Ditto.
Sirgajah	6,103·5	ditto. Ditto.
Total	13,462·8	

3. The grand total of population of all the estates is as follows :—

Men	120,742
Women	121,284
Boys	85,183
Girls	78,771
Total	405,980

4. I have for each estate classified the population as follows :—

	Males.	Females.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Dravidians	54,547	55,047	39,739	35,768	185,101
Kolarians	24,705	24,038	15,027	14,974	78,744
Hindus	20,091	20,518	14,754	13,546	68,909
Mahomedans	701	836	366	445	2,348
Impure and mixed	20,608	20,845	15,297	14,038	70,878
Total	120,742	121,284	85,183	78,771	405,980

5. The descriptive notes in the tabular statement will, I trust, be found sufficiently full to render further explanation unnecessary in this report.

6. You are aware that the census of these estates was effected, under the supervision of the different chiefs, by enumerators appointed and paid by them. The papers first submitted were in my possession when I proceeded on circuit, and I took every opportunity of testing them whilst on tour in the Tributary Mehals. I was not satisfied with the result in regard to Gangpur and Bonai, and caused the census of those estates to be taken a second time, by enumerators more carefully selected and under better supervision. I see no reason to doubt the correctness of the second census.

7. The faults detected by me when testing the papers were chiefly omissions of children, especially of girls. The people seemed to think that to number little girls was an unheard-of and intolerable

proceeding, and several times asked what we meant by taking note of the existence of those young creatures. I give the following as amongst the most striking instance I found of the omission :—

First census.	Males.	Females.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
<i>Bonai.</i>					
Jorda	43	31	17	4	95
Kamarposh ...	32	19	10	2	63
<i>Test Enumeration.</i>					
Jorda	45	44	34	34	157
Kamarposh ...	30	26	16	21	93

8. In the revised census from Gangpur and Bonai there is still a disproportion between the males and females,* but not more than has been found in other parts of India, where careful enumeration of the population

	Males.	Females.
* Gangpur...	37,751	35,886
Bonai ...	12,645	12,187

has been made. In all the estates the males are, according to figures given, in excess of the females; the aggregate surplus of the former being 5,870 in a total population of 405,980.

9. The crime of infanticide has never been imputed to any class of the population of the Chota Nagpore province.

10. The total population and total number of houses exhibited in

Sirgajah	50
Gangpur... ..	52
Bonai	52
Udaipur	53
Korea	58
Chang Bhukar ...	46
Jashpur	50

the census papers give an average per house in each estate as shown in the margin.

11. I believe the classified statements give as full information relative to the tribe, caste, race or religion, and occupation of the different people, as is required for the purposes of the census. Should you desire fuller details regarding the peculiar races enumerated, I may venture to refer you to my work on the descriptive ethnology of Bengal, now ready to be issued. I have given separate statements of population according to professions and occupation, but through a misconception the figures show male adults only, except in the cases of women working independently.

12. Referring to the memorandum of classification sent to me with your docket No. 675 of the 22nd November last, I think, in regard to occupation, the information sent will be found sufficient. A foot-note to the statements of occupation show the number of people who can read and write in each mehal. The figures are lamentably low.

13. There are no towns in the Tributary Mehals. Adjoining the houses of the chiefs there are a few shops, but nothing that would be called even a bazaar in lower Bengal. The extraneous wants of the people of the western mehals are supplied annually by traders, who proceed in bodies from the bazaars in Chota Nagpore Proper and Palamow, taking with them an ample supply of piece-goods, brass and pewter vessels, beads and other ornaments, which they exchange for the produce of the country or for cash. These traders make a circuit through the country, always halting about the same date every year at certain fixed points for several days. Then fairs are held, which attract a large attendance of the country people.

14. I append a statement showing the number of inhabitants of villages. It will be seen that there is no village with 1,500 inhabitants. The average number of inhabitants to a village is 135·2.

Number.	Estates.	Total number of villages.	Villages containing from 5 to 100 persons.	Villages containing from 101 to 200 persons.	Villages containing from 201 to 500 persons.	Villages containing from 501 to 1,000 persons.	Villages containing from 1,001 to 1,500 persons.
1	Sirgajah	1,295	612	375	282	24	2
2	Udaipur	152	58	42	46	6	.....
3	Jashpur	394	150	133	101	9	1
4	Korea	225	153	47	25	.....	.....
5	Chang Bhukar	100	69	19	12	.....	.....
6	Bonai	234	153	52	25	4	.....
7	Gangpur	601	336	157	98	10	.....
	Total ...	3,001	1,531	825	589	53	3

15. No attempt has been made to give separate registers of population by police jurisdiction, as though there are persons exercising the authority of thanadars in the tributary estates, the survey gives no definition of their jurisdictions. The census papers give the population by divisions called tuppehs, but as we do not know the areas of the tuppehs, it would be useless to abstract this information.

16. I have given no religion register of the estates. The descriptive remarks in the classification by races give all the information on this point that is procurable. The religious definitions are extremely vague. Half the non-Aryan people would call themselves Hindus if asked the question, yet they maintain also their pristine superstitions; and a good deal more than half the pure Hindu population, whilst sitting at the feet of Brahmans or Gosains, are also much swayed by the superstitions of the aboriginal tribes. As a rule, the people are too ignorant or apathetic to be able to declare to what sect of the Hindu religionist they belong, and I should only have bewildered the enumerators by asking them to decide this point.

17. Referring to circular No. 22 of the General Department, dated 16th ultimo, I have to add a few observations on the village administration in the Tributary Mehals.

18. In all of them there are feudatory estates, the holders of which are bound to follow the chief to the field when his services are required by Government. These estates are held besides at low quit-rents understood to be fixed in perpetuity, but the holders are expected to aid their chief pecuniarily when marriages or other events take place by which heavy expenditure is incurred.

19. In Gangpur and Bonai, where Uriya is spoken, the great feudatories are the mahapater, the manjhi, the saout, and the daundpat, and the persons bearing these titles are of the race or tribe of the people who first settled on the estate, and claim the right of investing the Rajah at each succession. The titles in the western estates are

bhaya, thakur, and, though now the hereditary nature of the office is seldom recognized, the Dewan. These gentlemen in the Tributary Mehals have authority as darogahs of police, and each is expected to keep a journal of the events of which, as a police officer, he should take cognizance; and he arrests and sends offenders to the Rajah.

20. In all these estates the khalsa villages are as a rule under headmen called gountias. They collect the rents and contributions that the villagers are bound or expected to pay, and are also guardians of the peace. The office is not strictly hereditary, but it is usually continued from father to son, unless the old family sink into poverty and some other supersede them in influence and position. The gountias generally hold on short leases of from three to seven years, and have to pay a fine at each renewal. They are of all castes and tribes; generally, but not always, of the caste or tribe that is most numerous or most powerful in the village. Sometimes gountias have several villages under them, and some villages have two or more gountias. In some places Hindu castes, as gowallas, have a headman called jat besai, who takes cognizance of breaches of caste rules; but this custom is, I think, dying out.

ASSAM DIVISION.

No. 1729T, dated Shillong, the 4th September 1872.

From—COLONEL H. HOPKINSON, Agent, to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, and Commissioner of Assam,

To—The Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2453, dated 16th July last (General Department), and in reply to the inquiry made in the first paragraph, to state that the census report of the Naga Hills district was submitted direct to the Inspector-General of Registration by the Officiating Political Agent on the 1st May last, and the report for the district of the Khasi and Jynteah Hills was forwarded through my office to the same officer on the 19th July.

2. Referring to the remarks of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in the 2nd paragraph of your letter under reply, as to whether I and the district officers consider the census of the Assam division to have been completely and satisfactorily taken, and asking for an exact account of what tracts of British territory were omitted from the census operations as being too wild, I beg to extract the following opinions of the Deputy Commissioners for His Honor's information :—

Kamroop (Major Lamb).—"I am of opinion that the census of this district has been completely and satisfactorily taken, and no tract of British territory was omitted as being too wild."

Durrung.—Major Graham reports that the census was taken throughout the British jurisdiction of the district of Durrung.

Nowgong.—Major Sherer reports that no tract of British territory within the jurisdiction of this district was omitted from the census.

Sebsaungor (Major Campbell).—"The only tract of British territory excluded from the census operations in this district was that known as the Naga Hills.

"The reason for not taking a census of the hills is because the tract is too wild, and moreover our present policy is not to exercise any control over the tribes inhabiting this tract. To take a census, therefore, would have been an impossibility.

"With regard to whether the census was satisfactorily taken, I have already, in my letter No. 152E of 13th February last, given my opinion that the returns were as correct as could be expected of a census taken not simultaneously."

Luckimpore (Major Clarke).—"I consider the census, as far as it could be tested, to have been satisfactorily taken; in several mouzahs taken at random, and where the population was thicker, the counting was tested through the police officers specially deputed. The results were satisfactory; the census extended to the regular mehals (mouzahs) alone. Beyond these we have no local subordinate agents for such work. The thin population is scattered over a vast extent of country, and again the frontier line is uncertain and very distant. To have sent enumerators to these tracts would have been unwise, as their acts could not be controlled in any way, and they might have made it a means of illioit gain; and second, their returns would have been quite untrustworthy."

Naga Hills (Lieutenant Butler).—"The only portion of the district that was entirely omitted was the unexplored tract of country lying between the Doyang and the Rengmahpani, north of the villages of Phemokedmah and Phemoketsamah.

"The figures shown opposite the names of the Naga villages were obtained, as opportunity offered, during my several tours through the country, when, with the aid of my dobashas, I counted the number of houses in each village as I passed through or encamped at it.

"The figures shown against the Kookies, Eastern Rengmahs, Kacharies, and Mikers were obtained by actual enumeration made by the houshas, mouzadars, and gaonborahs.

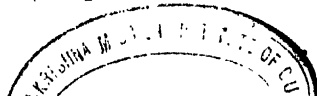
"The figures against Samoogoodting and Dimapur were also obtained by actual enumeration, the census having been taken through the assistance of the police under my supervision."

Khasi and Jynteah Hills (Colonel H. S. Bivar).—"The returns furnished were as accurate as could be expected.

"No portion of the country in the Khasi and Jynteah Hills was excluded from the operation of the census.

"As regards the agency by which operations were conducted in the Khasi Hills, the chiefs of the various states made the census in their respective elakas; and in British territory in the Jynteah Hills the dolois conducted the numbering; and in British villages in the Khasi Hills, and at the station of Shillong, the court officials performed the duty."

Commissioner's remarks.—I think the census was on the whole completely taken. It must be recollected that a census is not quite a novelty in Assam, for every year each mouzadar is supposed to number the people of his mouzah and make a return to the Deputy Commissioner. We have moreover a paid agency, so to say, scattered all over the province, and acquainted with the people. The jurisdiction of a mouzadar and his two or three munduls is not so large as to create any difficulty in counting the people residing in it. Moreover, the police were freely employed in testing the returns of the enumerators, and generally in the census operations. As the agency employed by the several Deputy Commissioners in the valley districts was the same, and as the mode of taking the census was similar, I do not think that it was better done in one district than in another, though probably the enumeration in Kamroop and Durrung may be somewhat more accurate, from the fact of there being more educated people scattered amongst the rural population in these districts. I can answer for Kamroop, for I happened to be at Gowhatty at the time, and am aware that the officers took great pains in the matter. In the valley districts no portions of British territory were omitted from the census in Kamroop, Durrung, and Nowgong; while in Sebsaugor, the Naga Hills alone were excluded, and in Luckimpore the tracts situated beyond the regular revenue-paying mouzahs. The reasons for these omissions have been given by the Deputy Commissioners. The whole of the population of the Khasi and Jynteah Hills was counted through the agencies of the Seims and others; while in the Naga Hills, Lieutenant Butler, during his cold-weather tour, counted the houses and people as he passed along, and he has explained what portion of his jurisdiction was not included in this counting.





16 JUL 1968

